

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

From Dreams to Deportations: The Case of Tunisian Irregular Migrants in Italy After 2011

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7fw750pj>

Author

Khedher, Rayed

Publication Date

2016

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

From Dreams to Deportations: The Case of Tunisian
Irregular Migrants in Italy After 2011

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
Requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Anthropology

by

Rayed Khedher

2016

© Copyright by

Rayed Khedher

2016

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

From Dreams to Deportations: The Case of Tunisian
Irregular Migrants in Italy After 2011

by

Rayed Khedher

Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2016

Professor Sondra Hale, Co-Chair

Professor Suzanne E. Slyomovics, Co-Chair

This dissertation contributes to the study of transnational migration and human mobility by ethnographically documenting the lives of 60, male, Tunisian, irregular migrants—part of a mass migration of 30,000 people—who fled the 2011 Tunisian uprising by crossing the Mediterranean Sea and landing in Italy where they created, according to Italian authorities, an “emergency situation.” Although most of these migrants intended to use Italy as a gateway to other countries, such as France and Germany where they already had established social networks, many found themselves stuck in Italy where they were considered “illegals” under Italian law. A number of them faced human rights abuses such as deportation back to Tunisia, suffered violence and oppression at the hands of the Italian police and Italian society at large, and were stigmatized as

“potential criminals” and “hidden terrorists” by both state and non-state actors, i.e., employers, media and the larger public.

Using narratives and oral histories from the study population, this research explores 1) the processes of criminalizing and dehumanizing the migrant “Other” such that violence perpetrated against him is permitted and rationalized; 2) the irregular migrants’ experience, discussion, negotiation of, and resistance to, their socially constructed “illegality” and “criminality”; and 3) the trends in anti-migrant violence and oppression and their consequences for the migrants’ identities, survival strategies, and daily struggles. Transnational migration scholarship and its idea of the “permeability” of national “borders” as shifting political spaces provided a theoretical foundation for this multi-sited research. The project transcends geographical boundaries to reach a macro-level understanding of the study population and to demonstrate the processes through which transnational movements are produced, forged, and maintained. The relevance of this research cannot be overstated as political turmoil in the Middle East continues, and irregular migrants and refugees pour into Europe. Thus, although the number of Tunisian migrants to Italy has significantly dropped since the 2011 uprising, hundreds of thousands of Syrians have been landing on Italian southern shores since 2015 when Syria entered into a civil war.

The dissertation of Rayed Khedher is approved.

Susan Ossman

Nouri Gana

Sondra Hale, Committee Co-Chair

Suzanne E. Slyomovics, Committee Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2016

To my father

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	ix
Acronyms and Abbreviations	x
Acknowledgements.....	xi
Vita	xv

CHAPTER ONE – Introduction

I. Background: Post-uprising Tunisian Migration to Lampedusa	3
II. Transnational Research: Methodological Considerations	7
III. “Irregular” versus “Illegal”: Which Term to Use?	14
IV. Research Questions, Methodology, Significance and Dissertation Outline	15
i. Research Questions.....	15
ii. Methodology	16
V. Purpose/Significance.....	16
VI. Dissertation Outline	17

CHAPTER TWO - Tunisian Migration to Italy: Historical Background and Migration Policies/Laws

I. Introduction.....	22
II. Historical overview	23
i. Migration trends before 2011.....	23
ii. Migration trends during/after the 2011 Uprising.....	30
III. Italian migration policies from the 1970s to the present.....	36
i. Law 39/1990 <i>legge martelli</i>	37
ii. Law 40/1998 <i>legge turco-napolitano</i>	38
iii. Law 189/2002 <i>legge bossi-fini</i>	39
iv. Security set 94/2009 <i>pacchetto sicurezza</i>	40
v. “North African Emergency”: Recent Policies	42
IV. Italian Migration Laws and Policies: A Critique	45
V. Conclusion	50

CHAPTER THREE - Research Design and Methodology

I. Introduction.....	52
II. Research Setting and Methods.....	52
i. Multi-sited Locales	53
1. <i>Hay Ettadhamen</i>	54
2. <i>Sicily</i>	56

a. <i>Palermo</i>	57
b. <i>Trapani</i>	59
c. <i>Sciacca</i>	60
d. <i>Agrigento</i>	60
3. <i>Lampedusa</i>	61
ii. Preparation for Fieldwork.....	62
iii. Recruitment of Participants	64
iv. Data-Gathering Strategies.....	65
v. Archival Research.....	66
vi. Participant Observation.....	67
vii. Open-ended Interviews	70
viii. Data Management Strategies	72
ix. Data Analysis Techniques	73
III. Ethics & Confidentiality	75
IV. Issues of Positionality: Personal Reflections	76
V. Conclusion	78

CHAPTER FOUR - Review of the Migration Literature

I. Introduction.....	80
II. Key Migration Theories: Conceptual Issues.....	82
III. New Debates on Transnationalism	85
IV. Multi-sited Ethnography: New Challenges in the Field(s)	95
V. Space and (im)mobility as Social Constructs	99
VI. The Role of Social Networks.....	102
VII. Conclusion	105

CHAPTER FIVE - From Tunisia to Lampedusa: Selected Personal Narratives

I. Introduction.....	107
II. Figurative Use of the Word <i>harqa</i>	109
III. Pre-departure.....	111
i. Recruitment.....	112
ii. At the <i>Gouna</i>	115
IV. The Sea Crossing	117
i. The Boat and Ferryman	118
ii. Dangers at Sea.....	120
V. The Detention Center	122
VI. Life Outside	128
i. Idleness: Repercussions	128
ii. Job-Hunting.....	129
iii. Male-male Prostitution.....	132
iv. Conclusion	134

CHAPTER SIX - The Social Construction of the Migrant: “Illegal” and “Criminal”

I.	Introduction	135
II.	Deportation and the Process of Criminalization	137
i.	The Irregular Migrant	137
ii.	The Asylum Seeker	139
III.	Local Media: Populist Rhetoric	142
IV.	The Migration Security Debate: The Populist Agenda.....	145
V.	Problematising Islamophobia	150
i.	What is Islamophobia?.....	152
ii.	Islamophobia: A New Form of Racism	155
VI.	Conclusion	162

CHAPTER SEVEN - Survival Strategies and Resistance

I.	Introduction	164
II.	From Invisibility to Visibility.....	166
i.	Bodily Self-inflicting Harm	168
ii.	“The Right to Claim Rights”	169
iii.	Individual Acts of Survival and Coping Strategies	170
II.	Transnationalism, Social Networks, and Social Media	173
i.	Social Networks	174
ii.	Social Capital	176
iii.	Social Media	177
III.	Trans-border and Local Movements	177
i.	NGOs’ Support, Mobilization, and Public Visibility	180
ii.	Migrant Advocacy Organizations	181
IV.	Conclusion	184

CHAPTER EIGHT - Concluding Thoughts and Observations

I.	The Study: Research and Results	186
i.	Research Questions and Strategies	186
ii.	Research Findings	187
1.	<i>Al Harqa</i> : A Transnationally Manufactured Phenomenon	187
2.	The Italian/European Response and the “Migration Industry”	188
3.	Populist Rhetoric and the “Other”	190
4.	Living in the Shadow of Islamophobia	192
5.	Migrant Resistance and Success	193
II.	Research Significance	195
III.	Future Research	196

BIBLIOGRAPHY	203
--------------------	-----

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: “La Porta d'Europa,” work of the artist Mimmo Paladino	6
Figure 2: Lampedusa: Only 72 miles from the Cap-Bon in Northern Tunisia	26
Figure 3: Geographic Distribution of Tunisian Emigrants, 2002 and 2012	28
Figure 4: Tunisian Major Departure Points to Lampedusa and Sicily	32
Figure 5: The two Rims of the Mediterranean: Tunisia, Lampedusa, Sicily	53
Figure 6: Two Migrants Teasing Each Other on the Beach in Lampedusa	62
Figure 7: Migrants Arriving by Sea to Europe	107
Figure 8: Dead and Missing Migrants in the Mediterranean	108
Figure 9: Sea Crossings on Rise	118
Figure 10: Ship Wreck in Lampedusa	121
Figure 11: Migrants in Lampedusa Center	124
Figure 12: Reception Center in Lampedusa	127
Figure 13: Total Number of Detected Irregular Border Crossings	136
Figure 14: The Various Migration Routes to Lampedusa and Sicily	189

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARCI- *Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana* (The Italian Recreational and Cultural Association)

CARA - *Centro Accoglienza Richiedenti Asilo* (Hosting Centre for Asylum Seekers)

CIE - *Centro di identificazione ed espulsione* (Center for Identification and Deportation)

ENDA - Environment and Development Action

EU - European Union

EUROPOL - European Police Office

FRONTEX - From French: *Frontières extérieures* for “external borders”

G8 - G8 stands for Group of Eight and is made up of leaders from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the UK and the United States of America.

IOM - International Organization of Migration

MENA - Middle East and North Africa

NAFTA - North American Free Trade Agreement

OMN - Operation Mare Nostrum

RAI – *Radio televisione italiana*. Italian Radio Television

TG4 – *Tele Giornale 4* (Italian TV channel for news)

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UN - United Nations

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful beyond words to all my research participants in Lampedusa, Palermo, Agrigento, Sciacca, Trapani, and Hay Ettadhamen, who graciously shared their lives, secrets, experiences, fears, anxieties, laughter, food, homes, dreams, desires, vulnerability, resilience, and above all, pride and dignity. Without these exceptional individuals, this dissertation would not have seen the light. Thank you especially to my two main informants, Monji and Houcine, who helped me settle in Palermo, introduced me to their social networks, and explained *il Sistema* to me. I count myself fortunate to be a part of their lives. As Monji always said, “*Inti wahid minna* (You are one of us).” What an honor!

This project would not have been possible without the support and guidance of the members of my exceptional Committee, and I am so appreciative that I had the honor and privilege of learning from each one of them. I am extremely grateful to my Co-Chairs, Sondra Hale and Susan Slyomovics for their invaluable, scholarly contributions and insights, earnest feedback, guidance, enthusiasm, patience, and endless support. They believed in me, helped me think and re-think my research questions and data analysis, and meticulously and tirelessly went over every line of this dissertation to make sure I had given it my best. To both of them: Thank you will never be enough!

Special thanks go to Susan Ossman, my Committee member, for her pertinent insights, meticulous feedback, and her great motivation during the most difficult times of my work. I am also indebted to her for letting me take part in her recent project, “The Moving Matters Travelling Workshop,” which, for me was a truly amazing experience. I would also like to thank Committee member Nouri Gana for his enthusiasm towards my “timely” project, for his continued support over the years, and for his constant reminders about “publish or perish.”

I also want to thank my graduate student “tribe”: Farzad Amoozegar-Fassie, Adam Fish, Meher Varma, Cassandra Markoe, Naazneen Diwan, Rana A. Sharif, Ben Shepard, Lubna Saira, Reem Mahdoui, Yael Assor, Katelyn J. Bishop, Keziah Conrad, Jan David Hauck, Amy Malek, Angela Orlando, Muriel Vernon, Ellen Sharp, Clinton Humphrey, Sonya Rao, and Mindy Steinberg. These warm and encouraging colleagues offered me not only intellectual support and professional collegiality, but also conversation, food, drink, laughter, and a wealth of life lessons. I cherish dearly the many pleasant moments we shared together. I also extend special thanks to Farzad for always providing me with extremely valuable suggestions and for editing parts of this dissertation.

I give profound thanks to others who have helped me on my path. To Louisa Del Giudice: I say, “*Grazie Mille*,” for being a true and supportive friend throughout the various stages of my research and writing. I appreciated all your superb editorial help and comments on the early chapter drafts of this dissertation. You are a true source of inspiration, and your big heart and friendship mean so much to me. Great big thanks must also go to Ann Walters, helper and supporter, who threatened me with a stick if I did not make progress. I admire her professionalism, friendliness, humor, patience, and knowledge of the tips and tricks any anthropology graduate student badly needs to navigate his/her journey at UCLA. I am thankful to Cherie Francis for her continuous support and encouragement. I also want to extend my thanks to my Co-directors of the Zita Project in the Archaeology, Anthropology, and Ethnography of Southern Tunisia: Ali Drine, Hans Barnard, and Brett Kaufman for all their support and encouragement. Finally, I am indebted to Claire Harrison for her extremely incisive and practical suggestions and her meticulous editing of my dissertation.

I owe a great debt to my late M.A., Advisor and good friend, Pamela Bunte, who was always in my thoughts on this journey. Right after I got my M.A., Pam “aggressively” pushed me to embark on a Ph.D. because she believed that I had the resilience to do it. I wish Pam had lived to witness this accomplishment. Pam, I owe you more than I can adequately thank you for. Rest in peace.

Special thanks go to my parents, particularly my father, an exemplary and visionary man, who believed in the sacredness of education. He sacrificed his life to educate his brothers and sisters and, later, his children. He lovingly planted the seed of knowledge in me, making my desire for learning insatiable and never-ending. I am so happy and grateful that he lived to see a second doctor in the family! ربي يطول في عمره (May you have a long life).” I particularly admired how he insisted on learning how to send text messages via Viber and WhatsApp so that he could text me daily (and I mean daily!) many of his motivational and inspiring words especially his famous *duaa* ربي يجعلك وين تقبل تربح (God makes you always a winner) and his renowned advice

دوما تتبع سياسة الفكرون (always follow the policy of the tortoise), نحبك كي القمودي (I want you like *Al Gammoudi*).

To my mother: I salute her for always boosting my energy to continue the “struggle,” never give up, and especially for believing in me. You have been a special source of inspiration and encouragement throughout my project.

I give many thanks to my sisters, Abir and Chahnez, and their respective husbands, Walid and Chokri, for always being there for me in both difficult and happy times. My sisters not only encouraged me, they also sent me inspirational messages throughout the writing process, each one in her own special way. To Abir, the other doctor in the family: your love, support, and reassurance was worth more than I can express on paper. To my brother Akram and his wife Sihem: thanks for your endless moral support. To my nephews, Fares, Skander, and Mahdi, and

my niece Mariam: I thank you for admiring my work and endeavors and for cheering me up with the latest jokes when things were difficult. To my spiritual brother Mondher: thank you for providing support, food, and jokes to ease the alienating aspect of writing this manuscript and helping me maintain my sanity.

Financial support for the research has been provided by UCLA Graduate Division (Dissertation Year Fellowship); the Wenner-Gren Foundation (Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Completion Fellowship); Open Society Foundation (Civil Society Scholar Award and Global Supplementary Grant); the UCLA International Institute Fieldwork Fellowship, and the UCLA Anthropology Graduate Research Grant. I am especially thankful to all of the above for their commitment to advance academic and anthropological research.

Los Angeles, August 30, 2016

VITA – Rayed Khedher

EDUCATION

Doctoral studies in Anthropology (Socio-cultural)- GPA: 3.85 Ph.D. Expected October 2016
University of California, Los Angeles, USA
Dissertation: “*From Dreams to Deportations: The Case of Tunisian Migrants in Lampedusa*”
Committee: Sondra Hale & Susan Slyomovics (Co-Chairs)
Master of Arts in Anthropology - GPA: 4.00 and Graduate Dean’s List Award - 2007
California State University, Long Beach, USA
Master Thesis: “*The Motivations of Tunisian Men to Migrate to Italy: An Ethnographic Study of the Hay Ettadhamen Township*”- Obtained Best Master Thesis Award in the College of Liberal Arts, CSULB
Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Civilization 1995
Université des Sciences Humaines et Sociales, Tunis, Tunisia

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Dissertation Year Fellowship (DYF) 2015-2016
UCLA, Los Angeles, USA
Wenner- Gren Foundation Dissertation Completion Fellowship 2015-2016
Wenner-Gren Foundation, New York, USA
Civil Society Scholar Award 2015
Open Society Foundation, New York, USA
PBK International Scholarship 2015
Phi Beta Kappa Society, Irvine, USA
Global Supplementary Grant 2013
Open Society Foundation, New York, USA
The International Institute Fieldwork Fellowship 2012
UCLA, Los Angeles, USA
Anthropology Graduate Research Grant 2012
UCLA Dept. of Anthropology, Los Angeles, USA
The Wadsworth International Fellowship 2008-2011
Wenner-Gren Foundation, New York, USA
Bourse d’Encouragement aux Jeunes Chercheurs 2009-2010
Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Tunis, Tunisia
Best Anthropology Thesis Award in The College of Liberal Arts 2007
CSULB, Long Beach, USA
Dean’s List Award (Awarded to 1% of the College graduate students) 2007
College of Liberal Arts, CSULB, Long Beach, USA
Center for International Education, CSULB, Long Beach, USA
Merit-based Enhancement Fellowship (Tuition waiver) 2004-2007
College of Liberal Arts, CSULB, long Beach, USA

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Co-Director, Zita Project in the Archaeology, Anthropology, and Summers 2013-2016
Ethnography of Southern Tunisia, Zarzis, Tunisia (permit renewable)
- Anthropology Teaching Associate/Arabic Instructor 2009-2015
University of California, Los Angeles
- Graduate Assistant 2003 – 2007
California State University, Long Beach, Long Beach, California
- Youth Program Coordinator 1995 – 2002
El Taller International, Tunis, Tunisia
- Information/Publication Officer 1994 – 1995
Greenpeace Tunisia, Tunis, Tunisia

PUBLICATIONS

- In Press “Tracing the Development of the Tunisian Code of Personal Status,” *Journal of International Women's Studies (JIWS)*, USA
- In Press “Towards the Development of New Paradigms: Reflections on the Current State of Arab Anthropology,” *International Journal of Modern Anthropology, Association Tunisienne d'Anthropologie*, Tunisia
- 2015 *The Fear of Islam in Italy: The Muslim Migration Debate after the Arab Spring* (a three- volume set titled *Understanding and Experiencing Religious Diversity in Today's World*), NY: Praeger Publishers
- 2013 *Tunisian Irregular Migrants in Lampedusa: A Legitimization of a New Form of Racism*. In *Asking, We Walk: The South as New Political Imaginary*. Edited by Corinne Kumar (Streelekha Publications. Bangalore, India)
- 2012 ‘Tunisia’, in Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen M. Hobby (eds) *Encyclopedia of The Nations*. Gale, 13th edition
- 2008 “*Al Harqa: Dreams Beyond the Mediterranean*,” *UFAHAMU* (Peer-reviewed *Journal of the African Activist Association*), UCLA, California, Spring 2008
- 2007 *The Motivations of Tunisian Men to Migrate to Italy: An Ethnographic Study of the Hay Ettadhamen Township*
MA Thesis, CSULB, Spring 2007
- 2007 “Italy on TV: How the Construction of “Paradise Europe” Motivates Tunisian Men to Migrate to Italy,” *SWAA special volume*, California, Fall 2007
- 2001 *Singing in the Dark Times, Women Remember* [A collection of papers, testimonies and articles resulting from the World Court of Women Against War for Peace], Co-edited with Corinne Kumar, Madhu Bushan, Kalpana Chakravaty, Priya Bajpai, Philip Thigo and Amina Hassanni, W. Q. Judge Press, Bangalore, India
- 1999 *Banyan Tree, Towards New Visions, New Praxis* [A collection of articles on globalization, gender, development and human rights]. Co-edited with Kalpana Chakravaty, W.Q. Judge Press, Bangalore, India

FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Reading, writing and speaking fluency in Arabic, French, English, Italian and German

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Tareq's Story

After spending four months in the Milo Center (Centro) in Trapani, Sicily, and receiving a deportation order, Ajmi and Farid, two men in their late 20s, slit their wrists, using pieces of broken glass. The idea was to end up in the hospital and avoid being sent back to Tunisia. Ajmi and Farid were treated by the local Red Cross team and then were handcuffed and taken back to the Centro to be deported a few days later from the port of Palermo to the port of La Goulettes in Tunis. As an act of solidarity and resentment against their forced expulsion, a huge demonstration broke out at the Centro. A group of angry detainees started chanting revolutionary slogans, including those used in Al Qasba Square in Tunis during the popular uprising such as “Gas kartouch ittwansa ma ykhafouch” (Teargas and bullets, Tunisians are not afraid) and “Khobz w’ maa w’ Milo laa” (Bread and water, but no Milo). Other enraged detainees suddenly started yelling, “Allahu Akbar” (Allah is Great), and used their feet and the force of their bodies to break the Centro’s facilities, including furniture, plumbing, windows, and doors. The riot ended in a huge clash between the Centro staff, the Carabinieri (Italian police), and the detainees. Rafiq, a 22-year-old man, whose penchant for violence had earned him the nickname “Mafioso” among his friends, was immediately arrested, violently punched, and beaten with a water hose as he was about to set fire to one of the mattresses in the dormitory. Rafiq’s left eye was badly damaged from the violent beating (Fieldnotes, 08/23/14).

This account was told to me by Tareq, a tall, soft-spoken, malnourished, severely fatigued, 28-year-old former detainee at the Milo Trapani center, which, as one of the most crammed

centers in Sicily, was ironically referred to as Abu Ghraib. Tareq embarked with over 80 young men from Zarzis, a peninsula in Southeastern Tunisia from which most irregular departures took place during the Tunisian uprising, and landed on the island of Lampedusa, Italy, on March 14, 2011. I met him on a very hot and humid Sunday afternoon in July on the steps of a popular *gelateria* in Agrigento, Sicily. Tareq gave me a warm and welcoming smile that was belied by the desperation and anger emanating from his eyes. Despite the heat of the day, Tareq was wearing a heavy navy-blue pullover which made me sweat just to look at him¹ Tareq had escaped the Centro two months earlier and had been living on the street ever since, sleeping on the benches of *la stazione centrale* (Central Station) in Piazza Marconi, on flattened card boxes in local parks, or on the beach. Tareq had been trying to find a job on a farm in Ragusa where his friend, Abdel Haq, was harvesting watermelons, but to no avail. To eat, Tareq, like many other Tunisian irregular migrants, relied on whatever he could get from the local charitable and religious organizations operating in Agrigento, such as the Catholic Church's Caritas Internationalis.

The story Tareq recounted about Ajmi, Farid and Rafiq echoes many other compelling stories of this research's study participants who revolted against their predicaments and potential deportations by damaging centers' facilities, going on hunger strikes, and harming their own bodies with acts such as slitting their veins, sewing their lips, and burning their fingertips. This destruction and self-violence constituted a message of anger and contestation for the Italian authorities and the larger public, but were also ingeniously used as a way for a number of Tunisian migrants to gain time and circumvent their impending deportation.

¹ It turns out that the pullover was donated to Tareq by Caritas International, a confederation of Roman Catholic relief, development and social service organization.

I. Background: Post-uprising Tunisian Migration to Lampedusa

Since January 2015, the irregular sea crossings into Europe, mainly through Italy and Greece, carried a highest-ever, recorded peak of over a million migrants and refugees entering the European Union (Kingsley 2015). The migration started during the popular uprising that shook Tunisia in December 2010, which created massive social and political turmoil and led to the subsequent fall of the 23-year-old, totalitarian regime of Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali on January 14, 2011. Between January and September 2011, 42,807 persons entered Italy by sea and landed in Lampedusa, an island that is closer to Africa than to the Italian mainland and is located south of Sicily, about 113 kilometers from Tunisia. Approximately 25,000 were from Tunisia (UNHCR 2011), creating what Cuttitta calls “the Tunisian turn” (Cuttita 2014:203). The new, massive flows of migrants totally and quickly altered the demographic and socio-cultural landscape of the island creating an unprecedented “human emergency.” Since mid-February 2011, the beginning of the crisis and up to mid-April 2011, the words and images used by the Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi and his ministers were highly charged and discriminatory. They used expressions such as “North African emergency,” “exodus of biblical proportions,” “human tsunami,” “invasion,” and “black danger” (Livi 2011). According to a Caritas Internationalis volunteer in Lampedusa, many residents were still terrified by the sudden invasion of Tunisian migrants and the newly arrived Syrian refugees: “They truly believe that most Tunisian migrants are terrorists and dangerous criminals who fled Ben Ali’s prisons, escaped the country, and came to destroy, steal, take jobs by force, and convert the island to Islam.” A local of Lampedusa demonstrated this mind-set:

Every day, you hear about a car that has been stolen, a house that was broken into, food disappearing from supermarkets, etc. And guess who the perpetrators are?

They are the *marrocchini* ². I do not see any solution except to throw them out and keep closing our borders against these dangerous human invasions. [Pause.] Now, we are receiving Syrians and Libyans and the situation has become even worse. It is *una invasione umana* (a human invasion). *Basta vuol dire basta* (Enough is enough). These invasions have to stop immediately. We are no longer talking about being fascist, racist, or xenophobic. We are now talking about our basic daily survival and safety. If Sicily, this legendary and beautiful island has been sadly converted into the trash bin of Europe, it is simply because of all these immigrants. Gaddafi was the true guardian of the Lampedusan gate. Killing him was the biggest mistake. Now the gates are open, the human invasions will never stop. The whole continent will be flooded... those parasites use our system, steal our jobs or get welfare money... *Povera Italia! Via tutti i clandestini da casa nostra*" (Poor Italy! Out for all the clandestine people from our house) (06/02/2014).

Given the general state of lawlessness in Tunisia and the partial breakdown of border controls along the coast, the Tunisian authorities were unable to control this massive out-migration, and the number of Mediterranean crossings kept increasing dramatically during the Libyan uprising and the ongoing Syrian armed conflict. A large number of these migrants and refugees failed to be rescued and died because distress calls had not been answered or were sometimes deliberately ignored (Heller and Pezzani, 2014). The increased deaths were also due to the fact that migrants and smugglers were constantly trying out unconventional passage routes to escape being detected by border control agencies and coast guards. These alternative routes were often unfamiliar and did, in fact, cause a number of shipwrecks (Cuttitta 2014:197). Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs)³ and human rights groups have become increasingly concerned with calculating border-related deaths as they advocate for migrant rights and endeavor to reduce all kinds of border-related tragedies involving human loss (Fekete, 2003). According to the Tunisian Consul General in Palermo, Italy, more than 850 Tunisian irregular migrants drowned en route to Italy near the end of March 2011. A total of 120 migrants were missing, i.e., no bodies were

² Italian term usually refers to Moroccans, but the Italians use it to refer to Tunisians and other migrants from North Africa.

³ UNHCR, ARCI, Amnesty International, human rights Watch, Caritas Europa were amongst these NGOs.

found, but they were suspiciously announced still alive by the Italian authorities. The Consul concluded that many deaths remain officially unaccounted for either on the Italian or the Tunisian sides (Interview 07/23/2014).

Nidhal, a 29-year-old young migrant noted that

A week after we landed in Lampedusa on March 22, 2014, a boat loaded with over 60 people was rescued by the coast guards. Many died in the sea including Aymen and Nasserline, two friends of mine from Jebal Lahmar⁴ whose bodies have never been found. I was shocked when I heard that rescued bodies⁵ were collectively buried in one single grave in Lampedusa's cemetery, ironically called *Il cimitero umano* (the human cemetery). I secretly visited the cemetery with my friend Bilel...normally, it is forbidden and noticed that many graves have no names, and others have something such as the date of death and an inscription in Italian such as "Here lies a young man most likely from the Maghreb approximately in his 30s." Other graves, for reasons we did not understand, had plastic flowers on them" (Interview 06/22/2014).

Migrants arriving at Italy's southern shores comprised various categories of people, including Tunisians aspiring to have better life opportunities in the EU and others who claim to have worked for the former Ben Ali regime and fled to Lampedusa to request political asylum. Irrespective of their claims, all of these migrants fell under the United Nations (UN) 1951 Refugee Convention and were, therefore, humanitarian cases entitled to international protection. Yet, many were unlawfully subjected to immediate repatriation, a situation that troubled many local and international NGOs and human rights groups. Amnesty International argued that being removed from the island within one or two days of arrival would certainly prevent migrants from filing for political asylum—a serious human rights violation. Such deportation practices are

⁴ A popular neighborhood in Tunis with characteristics similar to Hay Ettadhamen.

⁵ The dead bodies were of mixed nationalities mainly from Sub-Saharan Africa, but included Tunisians.

strictly prohibited under international, regional, and domestic human rights as well as refugee law and would, in turn, constitute a breach of the *non-refoulement* principle.⁶

It is important to note that, for the majority of the study participants, Italy was not always a final destination, but a gateway to European and Scandinavian countries including Germany, Holland, and Sweden, but mainly France.⁷



Fig 1. “La Porta d’Europa,” Work of the Artist Mimmo Paladino

A number of migrants believed that political asylum applications in these countries are less bureaucratic and are often easily processed. In addition, the majority of Tunisian migrants have the most social and economic networks, which were established in the sixties and seventies, within these countries. Using these networks of primarily family and friends, migrants were able, either via communication technology, e.g., Facebook (FB), Skype, WhatsApp, and Viber, or in person, to get access help: survival tips; material support, i.e., food, accommodation, and money; emotional support; information about, and access to, jobs; and other resources and benefits in the

⁶ *Non-refoulement*, a key facet of refugee law, concerns the protection of refugees against being returned or repatriated to places where their lives or freedoms could be endangered.

⁷ According to the Office of Tunisians Abroad the number of Tunisians residing in France in 2012 is 668,668
Source : Office des Tunisiens à l’Étranger (OTE)/Direction de l’Information et des Relations Publiques (DIRP).

country of destination. The same online strategies and social media, as I will demonstrate in Chapter six, enabled migrants to instantaneously spread their migration stories about the sea passage and detention conditions, which thus gained more visibility and attracted more support and empathy for victims.

II. Transnational Research: Methodological Considerations

Researchers of anthropology who study migration have started to question some of the traditional methodological frameworks of the discipline, e.g., “doing ethnography.”

Anthropologists argue that this method is no longer appropriate or feasible with regards to research on current transnational processes (Appadurai 1991; Marcus 1995; Clifford 1997; Gupta & Ferguson 1997; Hannerz 2003; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Wolff 2004; Hage 2005; Gielis 2009; Scheper-Hughes 2010; Levitt and Waters 2002; Ley 2004; Pries 2001). Much of the literature generated through the use of transnational ethnographies and reflexive case studies demonstrates how transnational practices can become structural tools yielding plausible patterns of analysis, revealing intricate dynamics of the subject under study, and the bringing to light the larger structures in which they are embedded—results that “positive” science fails to do. Levitt et al. (2008) argue that migration ethnographic research, which focuses on the local and the global and employs micro-territorial units with micro-cultural communities, has the capacity to elucidate complex transnational phenomena and dynamics that earlier methodologies failed to capture. This type of research emphasizes the importance of different personalized life experiences, taking into consideration the socio-historical context and the risk involved in making “universalistic generalizations which dramatically obscure critical shades of difference” (Levitt et al. 2008: 4). This type of ethnographic research methodology gives importance to individual agency and transnational socio-cultural and personal practices, thus pushing scholars

to interrogate a number of categories that had been taken for granted, such as gender, race, ethnicity, citizenship, identity, and borders. This kind of research, often qualitative, enables participants to provide their own accounts of migration experiences and challenges by expanding on most aspects of those categories. As Bogdan and Bilken (1992: 30-31) observe, “The qualitative research approach demands that the world be approached with the assumption that nothing is trivial, that everything has the potential of being a clue that might unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied.”

This dissertation, which focuses on irregular migrants who came into Sicily after the 2011 uprising in Tunisia, investigates ways in which this group of migrants was, and still is, categorized, positioned, and represented in Italian dominant public discourse. I ethnographically document what happened to the migrants who landed in Lampedusa and Sicily by examining the various human rights abuses perpetrated against them. In doing so, I scrutinize the survival strategies of the study population and argue that these strategies were a mechanism, used by both individuals and sometimes groups, to reject the humiliation and various forms of stigma they experienced in detention centers as well as in the larger Italian society. To illustrate my analysis, I draw upon selective oral histories collected from migrants in Lampedusa, Sicily and Hay Ettadhamen, Tunisia. I also include various narratives of Italian protagonists to better understand the way residents shaped the Tunisian migrants’ negotiation of their position and individual subjectivities in the host society. I analyze the various survival tactics, both individual and collective, that Tunisian migrants employed to see how they informed, challenged or disrupted the dominant social constructions of migrants “as a threat.” In my analysis, I focus on local, transnational, individual, and collective acts of survival and resistance and their ability to disturb the power structures and the xenophobic migration discourse used in Italian society. I examine

how Tunisian migrants managed to reverse their situation of vulnerability and invisibility by actively affirming their “right to claim a right” (Isin 2009:380).

One of the main goals of this dissertation is to explore the ways in which migrants undermined their enforced invisibility and potential deportability by engaging in various forms of resistance to produce new practices of political belonging (Isin 2009), claimed their rights, and avoided deportation. I examine how migrants experienced their socially constructed “illegality” and “criminality” engaged with their migration project by moving away from being considered “sub-humans” and non-status persons to becoming active subjects. I argue that the criminalization narrative put forth by Italian migration laws, in addition to the essentialized images channeled by mainstream Italian media, has served to normalize deep, negative stereotypes that Italian citizens held about the Tunisian migrant population—stereotypes that resulted in more restrictive migration policies and tighter border-control operations. The criminalization of the study population was also used to justify the deportation of a number of migrants back to Tunisia, thus delegitimizing their claims for political asylum either in Italy or elsewhere in the EU. I argue that the unlawful deportations, criminalizing policies, and negative representations could be demeaning and dehumanizing for the irregular migrant, but also could function as a starting point for that migrant to craft various types of survival mechanisms and resistance strategies. Two main questions that I address in the dissertation are: what are the processes of the criminalization and dehumanization of the Tunisian migrants, and how did these processes impact their daily lives. I explore how these dehumanizing processes and the irregular status label made it difficult for these migrants to function as “normal” human beings by blocking their access to numerous life opportunities, by denying them rights and benefits, and by hindering their participation in Italian society. For instance, I was interested to see how the

Tunisian irregular migrant population could effectively protest against their potential deportability while, at the same time, be a “hidden,” vulnerable, and often silenced population. In doing so, I draw upon James Scott’s (Scott 1990) concept of “weapons of the weak” to study migrants’ everyday forms of resistance and the ways in which they contribute to the protection of their rights and the advancement of their claims regarding their “non-status” situation. I am interested in strategies used by the study population, from the complex, i.e., self-inflicting bodily harm to avoid deportability, to the simple, i.e., acquiring fraudulent documents to access the labor market.

The conceptual framework for this dissertation is embedded in transnational migration scholarship that is particularly influenced by the idea of the “permeability” of national boundaries and the resulting economic, socio-cultural, and transnational political exchanges taking place across borders (Appadurai 1991, Schiller and Blanc 1993, Yuval-Davis 2011, Ossman et al. 2007). This “permeability” and “blurred” borders, I argue, have been strategically employed by members of the study population to rethink their positions in mainstream Italian society so that they could combat ongoing discrimination and other forms of subordination and oppression that they encountered. I use the concept of “transnationalism” as an analytical tool to describe the “process by which migrants, through their daily activities, forge and sustain various social, economic, and political relations” that connect them with a number of social networks across national borders (Bach, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc 1994: 6). My study engages these debates to reframe the question of “borders” as shifting political spaces which, by virtue of their fluidity and overlapping exchanges between people, goods, ideas, etc., defy any bounded and fixed characterization or classification. Evidently, globalization creates and increases the intensity and interconnections of human actions, as well as producing new sites and logics of

representation, but also resistance, both actual and virtual. The use of social media in sparking the North African popular uprisings is a strong example of the massive transformation of the means by which transnational political organizing is gained, maintained, and diffused, as well as its ability to forge spectacular new forms of resistance and political participation.

This study also looks at how Tunisian migrants use transnational networks, communication technologies, and social media to reject their label as “passive victims” by re-enacting their resistance against the state’s hegemonic practices and its oppressive migration policies. Throughout the dissertation, and to illustrate my arguments, I employ various narratives to help readers better understand aspects of some of these pertinent issues as they relate to the plight of post-uprising Tunisian migrants. I sometimes quote the study participants directly to give vibrancy to their voices which can vividly portray the problems they are facing. Occasionally, I paraphrase their perspectives to illustrate their various experiences of irregularity in the Italian host society. These narratives and perspectives present examples of how some migrants were active agents and able to move away from “invisibility” to “visibility,” inducing a shift which Ruggiero calls “reappearance” (Ruggiero 2000:54).

A transnational perspective for doing multi-sited ethnographic migration research, such as the one I am employing, should advance new explanations and incorporate multiple types and forms of ethnography and processes of theory development to tackle the complexity of the migratory phenomena at stake. A multi-sited qualitative design is motivated by the idea of increasing the variability of the sample size across multiple locations to ensure enhanced validity of the research data. The goal behind doing this type of ethnography is, not to arrive at a single paradigm or master narrative, but to find ways to place these different theoretical frameworks and conceptual and methodological trends in fecund conversation with one another. Marcus

(1998) argues that single-sited ethnography is incapable of capturing the complex situations of fieldwork, especially those dealing with transnational mobility and requiring multiple localities. According to him, a multi-sited ethnography has the potential of revealing the full scope of the migration experience in its micro- and macro-aspects. In his description of multi-sited fieldwork, he states that “it moves out of the single sites and local situations of conventional ethnographic research designs to examine the circulations of cultural meanings, objects and identities in diffuse time-space” (Marcus 1998: 86). This idea is well demonstrated by a number of ethnographic studies dealing with human mobility and transnationalism (White 1995; Guarnizo 1997; Wolf 1997; Schiller and Fouron 1998; Fitzgerald 2000; Salih 2002; Stoller 2002; Collins 2012; Holmes 2013; Ossman 2007; 2013). Most of these ethnographies are highly interpretive and reflexive. They stress the need to examine people’s movements via the lens of transnational global forces in order to take into account the multi-dimensional, socio-cultural, and political scopes shaping migrants’ subjectivities and the meanings they give to them. A number of these ethnographic studies emphasize the role of agency when dealing with transnational movements, demonstrating through ethnographic qualitative research how migrants negotiate and contest the various socio-economic and political pressures they encounter in host societies (De la Cruz 1995; Kearney 1995; Guarnizo 1997; Levitt 2001; Salih 2002, 2003; Worby 2010; Khosravi 2010; Vora 2008; Mahdavi 2011; Khalaf and Alkobaisi 1999; Akesson et al. 2010; Levin and Fincher 2010; McMurray 2000; Ben Salah 1994; Driessen 1991; Attiya 2010).

My ethnographic strategy employs a people-centered approach to transnationalism by not focusing on macro/structural dynamics of phenomena but, instead, by examining the subjective experiences of the Tunisian migrant population of the study and the way in which they negotiate their identities and the myriad of asymmetrical power relationships that govern their everyday

lives. My intentions are not to produce a sample that can stand as a representative of the overall irregular migrants in my five research sites. Rather, I purposefully use this qualitative, exploratory, multi-sited research methodology to reach a deeper understanding of how these individuals interpreted their experiences and engaged with their local and transnational physical and socio-cultural environments through their everyday routine. The everyday, as Clayton says, “is a useful conceptual tool through which to examine the spatial and temporal dynamics of identity” (2009:483). A good ethnography is one that succeeds in interpreting “a situation that incorporates the participants’ symbolic meanings and ongoing patterns of social interactions” (Merriam and Simpson 2000:108).

Thus, a multi-sited qualitative research design was the most appropriate method to address my research questions and to collect accurate data and valuable details from the study participants’ perspectives. Marcus (1995) contends that multi-sited ethnographic research is useful in analyzing transnational processes since it helps researchers reach a macro-level understanding of their study population by tracing their movements and interactions through time and space across manifold locations.

A qualitative research approach that puts great emphasis on the researcher’s immersion in the field, such as the one I employed, helped me better understand the meanings Tunisian migrants attached to the experiences of “vulnerability” across various physical and virtual spaces. Vulnerability as defined by Chambers:

means not lack or want, but exposure and defenselessness. It has two sides: the external side of exposure to shocks, stress and risk; and the internal side of defenselessness, meaning a lack of means to cope without damaging loss. Loss can take many forms—becoming or being physically weaker, economically impoverished, socially dependent, humiliated or psychologically harmed (Chambers 1995:20).

III. “Irregular” versus “Illegal”: Which Term to Use?

Throughout the dissertation, and as I will demonstrate in Chapter five, I use the term “irregular” rather than “illegal” in compliance with existing migration scholarship. The migration literature has often contested the term “illegal” as being loaded with negative associations towards human beings (De Genova 2002, 2005; Ngai 2004; Duvell 2006). This critique is given voice by the famous human rights quote, credited to Elie Wiesel: “No human being is illegal.” Therefore, the ideologically loaded adjective “illegal” has been substituted by the term “irregular.” Referring to a person as “illegal” obscures the historical and political construction of migrant categories, confuses the changing nature of the migration status, and diminishes the humanity of the migrant. The migration experience is a dynamic one; an individual can adhere (or be made to adhere) to multiple categories during his or her migration journey. Based on ethnographic evidence, the migrants of this study have moved into, and out of, different migration statuses due to the continuously shifting migration legislation and regulation that keep taking place in Italy. Migration status is historically specific and changeable; this is demonstrated, in part, through regularization programs that give states the power to construct migrants as either legal or illegal (Baldwin-Edwards and Kraler 2009). Others by forging fake identities via criminal networks can move from an irregular status to a perfectly regular one by simply paying a bribe. Hence, the term is highly blurred and occasionally contested since irregularity does not define the migratory experience nor the worth of an individual. The adjective “irregular” is never frozen, but remains always very fluid. It may describe the migration flow as a whole, but only with regards to its interactions with states’ actions, which may deeply affect the course and structure of a migratory process (Cvajner and Sciortino 2010).

My ethnography focused exclusively on the Tunisian irregular male migrants who successfully arrived in Italy, either by themselves or via the assistance of a third party, and who happen to be the least protected under migration law. My assumption is that for this category of migrants, their irregular status is the main source of their constant vulnerability to human rights abuses, discrimination, marginalization, exclusion, and social stigma—a theme that I explore in more detail in Chapter 5.

IV. Research questions, Methodology, Significance and Plan of the Dissertation

i. Research Questions

By using a qualitative design, I aim to research two levels of human rights abuse: 1) violations of human rights by non-state actors, i.e., smugglers, employers, and the public; and 2) human rights abuses by the Italian authorities within detention centers at the point of entry. I discuss this topic by ethnographically exploring the construction of the Tunisian irregular migrant as the “violent Other,” the “potential criminal,” or the “hidden terrorist.”

The following research questions guided my observations, interviews and data analysis throughout the writing of this dissertation:

- 1) What are the processes of criminalizing and dehumanizing the migrant “Other,” and how do they permit and rationalize the violence perpetrated against him?
- 2) How did post-uprising Tunisian migrants and refugees experience, negotiate, understand and discuss their socially constructed “illegality” and “criminality”?
- 3) What are the trends of these forms of violence and oppression and their consequences on the migrants’ identities but, more importantly, on their survival and resistance strategies and transborder social engagements?

ii. Methodology

To answer these research questions, I employed a mixture of qualitative ethnographic methods, i.e., archival research, participant observation, life histories, and open-ended interviews, carried out over a 14-month period (June 2013-October 2014). I used a snowball sampling technique to recruit 60 young Tunisian males across the study's various locations (see Chapter four on Methods) between the ages of 20 and 35 years. My focus on male migrants is in no way intended to imply that women were not involved in the sea crossings, but their number compared to men remains very negligible. This multi-sited research was carried out in three main locations that hosted a large number of Tunisian irregular migrants: Sicily, i.e., Agrigento, Trapani, Palermo, and Sciacca, the island of Lampedusa, and a previous migration research site—the Tunisian township of Hay Ettadhamen, which had a large population of deported migrants.

V. Purpose/Significance

Through the proposed study, I hope to establish a basis for understanding the racialization of the irregular migrants' Muslim identity, the politicization of their experience of displacement, and their resistance and survival strategies in southern Italy. This project engages with discussions concerning transnational flows of ideas and larger, transborder, socio-political activities by studying the processes through which transnational movements are produced, forged, and maintained. There is a huge gap in the migration scholarly literature regarding the experiences of Tunisian irregular migrants in Italy. My dissertation responds to this gap by providing an ethnographic documentation of the members of this under-represented group and the way they handled the vulnerability of their lives, their survival strategies, and their rebellion

against their precarious living conditions within detention centers and mainstream society. This study could contribute to the ongoing academic and legislative debates in the field of transnational migration, human mobility, and migrants' human rights. It could also be of special relevance to practitioners and policymakers working on the issue of irregular migration of Tunisians and its wider socio-economic and political implications.

VI. Dissertation Outline

The dissertation is composed of eight chapters, including introductory and concluding chapters.

Chapter 2 is divided into two parts: an historical overview, and an examination of major Italian migration laws. First, I examine the history of migration trends in Tunisia prior to the migratory wave following the 2011 Tunisian popular uprising. I focus on different historical phases from the early 1940s until the uprising. I demonstrate how the implementation of visa requirements and the toughening of the visa procedures made irregular migration the only option for a number of Tunisians who were unable to enter Italy or Europe through official or legal channels. Secondly, I examine the major Italian migrant legislation, scrutinizing these laws by analyzing their socio-legal dimensions and arguing that their central goal is to fight against irregular migration through the implementation of more restrictive border control policies. I discuss the “criminalizing” content of the Italian migration laws such as the *Bossi Fini* law (Law 189/30 July 2002) and the ways in which it has contributed to the emergence of the irregular migration phenomenon as a “crime,” a “security issue,” and a question of “public order,” thereby exacerbating anti-migration feelings not only in Italy, but also in the EU as a whole. In the last part of the chapter, I attempt to show how the situation of “illegality” is the product of Italian migration laws.

Chapter 3 sets up the conceptual framework that I adopt for the dissertation, which draws from transnational migration scholarship and its idea of the “permeability” of national boundaries and “borders” as shifting political spaces. This “permeability” and “blurred” borders, I argue, have been strategically employed by my study population to rethink their positions in mainstream Italian society in order to combat the ongoing socio-political stigma and other forms of oppression that they encounter. I review and discuss the major theoretical paradigms and conceptual framework with regards to transnational migration research and their relevance to anthropology. I then discuss the multi-sited research design and assess its utility in addressing postmodern constructs such as “mobility” and the “spatial turn.” I also show how multi-sited research is valuable in helping researchers literally transcend geographical boundaries to reach a macro-level understanding of a study population. In addition, I analyze the phenomenon of irregular migration, arguing that it is a product of the transnational condition. Finally, I examine social network theory and demonstrate through theoretical and ethnographic evidence that social networks play a crucial role in the lives of irregular migrants by acting like a dynamic engine that fuels “chain migration,” which stimulates and accelerates the process of irregular migration.

Chapter 4: As a start, and in order to familiarize the readers with the research site and give a sense of context, I incorporate a detailed “thick” description of the five locations of my research, infusing each setting description with brief narrative sketches of a few informants to give readers a sense of who these people are, the way they think, and how they live their lives. I then explain the multiple techniques that I employed to facilitate immersion in these different field research sites and to recruit study participants. I describe in detail data collection strategies, i.e., archival research, participant observation, and open-ended interviews, as well as data analysis and management techniques. Finally, I discuss the importance of conducting ethical

research and review the procedures I followed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the study participants. I reflect upon the challenges of conducting such ethnography and share my positionality experience as a Tunisian anthropologist conducting fieldwork in both my native country as well as a foreigner in Italy.

In Chapter 5, I start by explaining the metaphoric usage of the expression “*harqa*” in the Tunisian vernacular as a reference to the phenomenon of irregular migration. To explore the various hardships, dangers, violence, and suffering that Tunisian migrants undergo from their departure point to their landing in Lampedusa, I discuss six specific stages of the migrant’s journey—pre-departure, sea-crossing, rescue or interception, detention, expulsion, and removal—with detailed, ethnographic-rich description of each step to depict the reality of these experiences. In doing so, I highlight the emotional and psychological impacts on migrants through the various testimonies from the study population in Lampedusa, Sicily, and Hay Ettadhamen, Tunisia. I then turn to the “industry of irregular migration”: how it is structured; who the people involved are; and what roles they play. I identify the various tactics involved in this “industry,” such as the recruitment of migrants, the cost of the passage, and the different strategies employed to collect money. The last part of the chapter includes narratives depicting the deplorable conditions, ill-treatment, and abuse Tunisian migrants go through in the Italian reception and detention centers. The migrants’ stories of their detention experiences include accounts of life-threatening situations, violence, humiliation, hopelessness, anxiety, and frustration—all demonstrating how detention affects migrants’ physical and mental well-being, exacerbates their existential precariousness and vulnerability, and degrades them until they feel no longer human.

Chapter 6 is organized into two sections. In the first section, I cover aspects of the context and “criminalizing” content of Italian policies and reactions towards the “illegal” human flows taking place during and after the post-Tunisian uprising. I provide a critical analysis of the social construction of the Tunisian migrant as the “Other” or the potential “criminal” by exploring the sensational and derogatory rhetoric in the local media. I explore the ambivalence of the Italian migration laws, such as the restrictive *Bossi Fini* law (Law 189/30 July 2002) and its introduction of the crime of “illegal migration,” to explore their impacts on the everyday life of the Tunisian migrant and the construction of his “criminalization.” I discuss the security argument, noting that it is often combined with the nationalist, xenophobic, racist discourse resulting in the exclusion of the migrant “Other.” In the second section of the chapter, I examine the “racialization” of Muslim migrants and how this narrative is used to implement an increasing number of restrictive migration policies and programs that, in turn, normalize new forms of islamophobic attitudes that exacerbate anti-Muslim rhetoric. In my analysis, I use a few narratives of study participants that echo the many other voices of the larger migrant population and give meaning to their experiences of suffering. The aim is to improve understanding of the experiences and impacts of Islamophobia on the identity construction and daily lives of this particular migrant population.

In Chapter 7, I argue that earlier conceptions of migrants as victims and passive objects do not always hold true, as demonstrated by the study participants in this dissertation who, to some degree, were able to thwart their normative representation by turning the discursive power relations and oppression into strategies of struggle and resistance. First, I lay out the theoretical framework in which my empirical findings will be grounded. I draw upon James Scott’s (Scott 1990) concept of “weapons of the weak” to study migrants’ everyday forms of resistance and the

ways in which they contribute to the protection of their rights and the advancement of their claims regarding their “non-status” situation. I demonstrate how acts of resistance, when efficiently and collectively enacted; can help reverse the situation of vulnerability, oppression, and stigma. When migrants become politically active, they can create a political space in order to challenge detention policies, common stereotypes, and state hegemonic practices. I use the concept of “transnationalism from below,” (Michael Peter Smith and Luis Guarnizo 1998) that examines people's mundane activities and everyday forms of agency within and across nation-state borders to demonstrate that the reliance on transborder and local social networks can be extremely useful in providing migrants with various strategies to navigate their migration journey and to adopt and engage in various resistance strategies. This chapter also looks at how Tunisian migrants use transnational networks, communication technologies, and social media to reject their label as “passive victims” by re-enacting their resistance against the state hegemonic practices and its oppressive migration policies.

CHAPTER TWO

TUNISIAN MIGRATION TO ITALY: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND MIGRATION POLICIES/LAWS

I. Introduction

In 1980s, Italy's population was 56.4 million people, 423.000 of whom were migrants from North Africa, the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia. Most arrived in the 1980s when Italy did not require an entry visa (Hamilton and Jachimowicz 2002). However, this migration pattern changed, starting in the early 2000s and intensifying in 2011, a time of popular uprisings in the Middle East. A huge number of Arab migrants, who were mostly irregular, crossed the Mediterranean Sea into Italy. Since the beginning of 2015, which has been labelled as the “migration crisis year,” the number of migrants heading to the EU, mainly through Italy and Greece, reached a peak: more than 1 million migrants and refugees, the highest number ever recorded. Despite massive, border-control operations by countries on the Mediterranean Sea, this body of water has become the most porous and dangerous border between Europe and its neighbors. Based on media reports, an Italian NGO estimated that 15,016 migrants had died or were missing at sea between January 1998, and September 30, 2014 (Fargues and Bonfanti 2014).

This chapter provides the context, both historical and legal, for a specific migrant flow as described in the introduction, that of young, male, irregular Tunisian migrants who landed on the small island of Lampedusa, Italy, which had become a prime transit point for Tunisians fleeing turmoil from their country's 2011 popular uprising. This content is organized into four sections: 1) an historical overview of Tunisian migration before 2011; 2) Tunisian migration from 2011 to the present time; 3) Italian migration policies/laws from the 1970s to the present time; and 4) a

socio-legal critique of those policies/laws to demonstrate their inadequacy in the overall management and governance of the migration phenomenon, as well as how they contributed to the concept of the migration phenomenon as a “security issue” not only for Italy, but for the EU as a whole.

II. Historical Overview

i. Migration Trends Before 2011

This section traces the first movements of Tunisians, who were mainly seasonal migrants, to Italy, and the increase in their numbers over time. As will be demonstrated, historical, geographical, and cultural connections developed between the two countries, created a strong “pull” for Tunisian agricultural and other low-skilled workers despite the rise of an anti-migrant movement in Italy and the crackdown on irregular migration.

The earliest of the large migrations of Tunisians occurred during World War II, when a large number of Tunisians went to France because that country needed manual labor from the Maghrebi region of north Africa, i.e., Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. These Tunisians replaced French workers who had been conscripted for war and those carrying out military operations in the Maghrebi region (Singer-Kerel 1985). Thousands of Tunisians migrated to France, working in farming, service, construction, and various other sectors that did not require professional skills or college diplomas. For the majority of Tunisians, the socio-economic, post-colonial links, their mastery of the French language, and pre-existing kinship ties and social networks made France the primary migration destination in the ten years following Tunisia’s independence in 1956.

However, in the 1970s and 1980s, Italy became a desirable migrant destination for many Tunisians. Factors such as geographic proximity and favorable income and demographic differentials attracted migrants fleeing unemployment and poverty, and they became the first

generation of Tunisians in Italy. Another factor was political. For example, in 1983, the political conflict that took place between Tunisia and Libya led to the expulsion of a massive number of Tunisian migrants from Libya, which fueled more out-migratory movements towards Italy.

These early migrants landed in the coastal towns of western Sicily, which was geographically close, i.e., only 72 miles away from Tunisia and to which Tunisia had maritime links. During this period, the Italian agricultural sector required an increased flow of manual labor (Koch 1989:190), and a new category of seasonal migrants came primarily to work either in olive and orange groves; grape, tomato, and watermelon fields; or the fishing industry. Seasonal migration was extremely useful to the Mediterranean type of agriculture practiced in the south of Italy, which requires a low level of technology and which may be performed with large numbers of unskilled and highly flexible workers. This early seasonal migratory wave also acted as “replacement migration” for local Sicilian workers who left their traditional agriculture and fishing jobs to work in the “industrial triangle” in Italy’s north where employment was more formal and secure (Faini and Venturini 1994: 327). As well, an influx of Tunisians started to rapidly fill gaps in the fishing industry, especially in the coastal Sicilian towns of Mazara del Vallo, Marsala, and Trapani. The surge of migrants, Daly states, escalated due to “the leniency and corruption of many local police officers and the increasing involvement of organized gangs, including the Mafia which created a boom in the migrant smuggling business into the south of Italy” (Daly 2001: 191). Other migrant destinations were Naples and the localities of the Campania region (Carchedi 1992; Vaccina 1983; Vizzini 1983) where a number of Tunisians took up various irregular jobs in vineyards as well as in construction.

The conjunction of seasonal labor and a particular demand, e.g., the harvest, produces a form of migration that Fassmann Hein (1995) calls “invisible” because it is barely evident to

authorities and often is confined to the countryside. Social services remain unaware of this migration, and the public only becomes cognizant of it if there are documented disputes and acts of violence between migrants and Italian workers who make up this irregular labor market. Fassman states that “this type of migration is hard to control and the provisions made by migration policies have little effect on it” (p. 85). He argues that “invisible” migration primarily involves people whose main purpose is to accumulate as much capital as possible to use in their home countries, i.e., reinvestments and/or financing of family networks (1995).

During the 1970s and 1980s, no entry visa was required for Tunisians traveling to Italy, and the Italian government actually encouraged the arrival of migrants from North Africa whose labor was necessary for building the Italian economy, especially in the agricultural sector. This situation of open borders created waves of several hundreds of North African migrants, mainly Tunisians and Moroccans, who were lured by better and more lucrative income to settle in Italy while the waves of seasonal and sporadic migration decreased (Koch 1989:190). In 1985, the number of Tunisian migrants in Italy was estimated at 4,400; by 1993, it had escalated to 50,000 (Giubilaro 1997: 64). Other factors also contributed to the escalating Tunisian migratory flow to Italy, e.g., the change in Tunisian political leadership in 1987. Under the new President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali, the Tunisian focus turned away from France and its old colonial ties towards Italy with the goal of fostering new bilateral economic and political relations. These Tunisian migrants generated various social networks, which were reinforced by the arrival of more migrants. The phenomenon of chain migration, in which one migrant brings a pool of other migrants, played a significant role in making Italy the second destination after France for working- and middle-class Tunisians (Mabrouk 2003).



Fig 2. Lampedusa: only 72 miles from the Cap-Bon region in Northern Tunisia

The absence of Italian entry rules also attracted various independent traders, primarily women and students, who took 35-minute flights to Palermo to purchase products, e.g., wholesale clothing, jewelry, and other items used for wedding ceremonies and other celebrations, for re-sale at profitable rates in Tunisia. Moreover, Italy continued to be a destination for many Tunisian students who arrived during summer vacation to engage in seasonal agricultural jobs located primarily in Sicily, e.g., Palermo and Trapani, and other southern cities, e.g., Naples. Many students would spend their *liras*, i.e., former Italian currency, earned from these jobs on merchandise such as electronic equipment, small household appliances, leatherwear, and clothing. They, in turn, sold these products in Tunisian markets, specialty stores, and on the streets, thereby creating a marginal and chaotic market activity of smuggled goods. This business, referred to as “*le commerce de la valise*” (suitcase trade), was very lucrative because Italian goods were highly prized. The trade in untaxed, imported Italian goods contributed to the wealth of individual households and encouraged the growth of the informal, local economy. Some migrants returning to Tunisia for a summer visit would

sometimes hire locally unemployed young men, often relatives, to sell these consumer goods. This socio-economic phenomenon flourished in the 1980s, creating new ways for Tunisians to earn a living, especially the urban poor.

In 1990, however, the Italian government introduced stricter travel protocols requiring an entry visa for Tunisian nationals, among others. The visa was instituted because of the increasing numbers of Tunisians and people of other nationalities, who were arriving on Italian shores to escape poverty and unemployment and to find better life opportunities. These migrants came mainly from Tunisia, but also from Morocco, Senegal, Libya, and some sub-Saharan African countries. These new waves of migrants started to fuel Italian political debates, which arose from a widespread public anxiety and fear in relation to migration in general. While migrant labor was increasingly needed, especially in northern Italy, public opinion continued to associate high immigration levels with increased crime, poverty, and local unemployment (Woodcock 2010). Consequently, the number of legal migrants decreased, especially during the first half of the 1990s.

After toughening its visa procedures, the Italian government decided to reinforce control of its maritime frontiers, thus solidifying its borders and creating the phenomenon of irregular migration for the first time (Mabrouk 2003, Fargues 2004). This irregular migration became the only alternative for many Tunisians and other young African men who were, and still are, unable to enter Italy or Europe through official or legal channels. In fact, during the last four decades, Italy has become one of the most important European destinations for an ever-growing number of irregular migrants arriving primarily from North Africa and Eastern Europe, i.e., from 143,800 in 1970 to 4,279,000 million in 2010 when they constituted 7.1% of the Italy's population (Rusconi 2010: 7-9). During this time, Italy transitioned from being traditionally a "sending"

country to becoming a “receiving” one, especially after the steep decline in the birth rate during the 1990s (King 1993; King and Rybaczuk 1993). Myron Weiner (1995:59) describes Italy as the “soft underbelly” of Fortress Europe, being the main entry point for many migrants looking for “a backdoor entrance to the European Union.”

Country of Residence	2002	Share of Tunisian Migrant Population (%)	2012	Share of Tunisian Migrant Population (%)
European countries	668,000	84	1,032,000	84
France	480,000	60	669,000	55
Italy	90,000	11	189,000	15
Germany	46,000	6	87,000	7
Maghreb countries	71,000	9	92,000	8
Libya	54,000	7	69,000	6
Arab countries	32,000	4	60,000	5
UAE	n.d.	n.d.	19,000	2
Saudi Arabia	n.d.	n.d.	17,000	1
Other countries	23,000	3	39,000	3
Canada	12,000	2	20,000	2
United States	9,000	1	15,000	1
Total	794,000	100	1,223,000	100

Fig 3. Geographic Distribution of Tunisian Emigrants, 2002 and 2012
Source: Office des Tunisiens à l’Etranger (Office of Tunisians Abroad)

The current requirements for a visa to Italy are rigorous, requiring at a minimum, 1) an application form; 2) a valid passport; 3) proof of payment of the visa fee; 4) round-trip reservations or an itinerary with dates and flight numbers specifying entry and exit; 5) proof of sufficient funds for duration of stay; 6) proof of travel/health/accident insurance; 7) proof of accommodation; 8) a certificate of employment and proof of leave; and 9) a personal interview after deposit of all the required documents. Not surprisingly, obtaining a visa to Italy and Europe, in general, is perceived by the majority of Tunisians as an insurmountable hurdle, thereby making irregular migration the only option to enter Europe. As one informant nicely put it “*Visa littalyene...hahahah...hkaya mustahila... Wallah ki tbous iinik*” (“Visa to Italy, hahah. It is an

impossible story...you won't get it even if you kiss your eye.”⁸. During the early 1990s, the first sea crossings from Tunisia to Lampedusa were generally spontaneous, but soon became lucrative sources of income for a booming business organized by professional smugglers. In his discussion of the relationship between the visa implementation and emergence of irregular migration in the Mediterranean, Cuttitta writes

First, it may be worth remembering that the roots of Lampedusa's current “borderness” originally lie in the birth of Schengenland and in the adoption of more and more restrictive immigration regulations at national and EU levels, beginning with the two most “classical” instruments of migration control: the imposition of the visa obligation on citizens of most non-EU countries, and of sanctions on carriers transporting undocumented migrants across state borders. Without these measures, undocumented boat migration would not exist, for migrants would possibly take an aeroplane to Rome or London, or a ferry to Palermo or Marseille, but surely not a dinghy to Lampedusa (Cuttitta 2014: 202).

Irregular migration flows increased considerably during the first decade of the 21st century due to uneven opportunities on both shores of the Mediterranean, the EU's continuous dwindling population and labor force, and the Tunisian labor-supply growth which outstripped economic development (Khachani, 2004: 35). By 2008, the number of arrivals to Lampedusa had increased to 31,250 people from 12,184 people in 2007 (Boubakri 2013:2). In 2008, Tunisian irregular migrants were ranked first among all other migrants arriving in Lampedusa, i.e., 6,762 migrants including 52 women and 184 minors (Boubakri 2013:2). During the pre-uprising period, 2010-2011, the climate of political repression, regional disparities, and widespread corruption, in addition to the global financial crisis, exacerbated Tunisia's labor market problems, elevating the unemployment rate for Tunisian youth from 27.5 per cent in 2010 to 40 per cent in 2011. This is significantly higher than the total unemployment rate that went from an average of 13 per cent in 2010 to 18.3 per cent in 2011 (NIS: 2011). In addition, the number of unemployed College

⁸ Kissing the eye” is a Tunisian expression referring to the impossibility of getting anything done.

graduates has more than doubled since the early 2000s with rates jumping from 14.4% in 2005 to 32% in 2010 (NIS 2011).

Despite these socio-economic hardships, Lampedusa continued to be the primary obsession and the stepping-stone for thousands of desperate Tunisian youths who dreamed of finding their fortune in the “European paradise” (Khedher 2008). Situated in the middle of the Sicilian channel only 72 miles from Tunisia’s coast, Lampedusa is the largest of the Italian Pelage Islands in the Mediterranean Sea. The island, known as the “*isola bella*” (the beautiful island), has a population of approximately 6,000 people and is famous for its pristine beaches which make it one of the major tourist destinations for Italians and travelers from other European nations. Its main industries are fishing, agriculture, and tourism. Ironically, the island has now also become the symbol of Europe’s migration crisis, as it is a gateway for an unprecedented number of irregular migrants and individuals claiming asylum in many European states.

ii. Migration Trends During/After the 2011 Uprising

On December 17, 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a poor fruit vendor in Sidi Bouzid, protested against the Tunisian government by committing an act of self-immolation. The enormous outrage that followed led to a national popular uprising against deplorable living conditions, political repression, and massive unemployment. On January 14, 2011, President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali fled the country leaving a political vacuum, a widespread socio-political and economic crisis, and disruptive chaos.

This popular uprising dramatically transformed the politico-migratory climate in the Euro-Maghreb region. Soon after, migrants and refugees began leaving Tunisia in small groups sailing north. From January to September 2011, a “human tsunami,” according to the Italian media, of

42,807 undocumented migrants and candidates for political asylum entered Italy by sea, with 25,867 landing in Lampedusa. This latter number is a dramatic contrast with the numbers two years prior: less than 5,000 in 2010 and less than 10,000 in 2009. Italy, as a whole had had an annual average of 18,788 in the previous decade (Fargues and Fandrich 2012:4).

In addition to being the closest point to the North African shore, Lampedusa has a center for entering migrants that includes a first-response facility, a reception facility, a first-aid center, and a detention center. Migrants stay at the center for a maximum of two days before being relocated to various centers on mainland Italy. Since 2009, the same center, located within close proximity to the small Lampedusan airport, has become a location for identification procedures and direct expulsion of newly arrived migrants. The Contrada Imbriacola Reception Center, which later became the “*Centro di identificazione ed espulsione*” (Centre for Identification and Expulsion) is administered by the Italian Ministry of Interior and strictly guarded by the Italian police. The facility has a capacity of 800 people, but due to the emergency situation, it was forced to host over 2,800 people (Severoni, 2011:6).

Migration to Lampedusa increased exponentially when civil war broke out in Libya in February 2011, and President Muammar Gaddafi was ousted and then killed. This civil war engendered an extreme state of violence and turmoil across the country, resulting in tens of thousands of casualties in early 2011. Several thousand Libyans, as well as Tunisians, Somalis, Eritreans, Sudanese, Nigerians, and other south Asian nationalities, e.g., Bangladeshi, Indians and Pakistanis, most of them ex-foreign workers in Libya, sailed to Lampedusa in old fishing boats and rubber dinghies to seek political asylum in Europe. These crossings caused many deaths, including those of young Tunisian men, women, and minors. The UNHCR declared that over 2,000 people died in the Mediterranean in 2011 alone, making it the deadliest year on

record (Wilkes 2012). According to Fortress Europe, over 13,500 people have perished in these dangerous crossings since 1998 (Fortress Europe 2012).

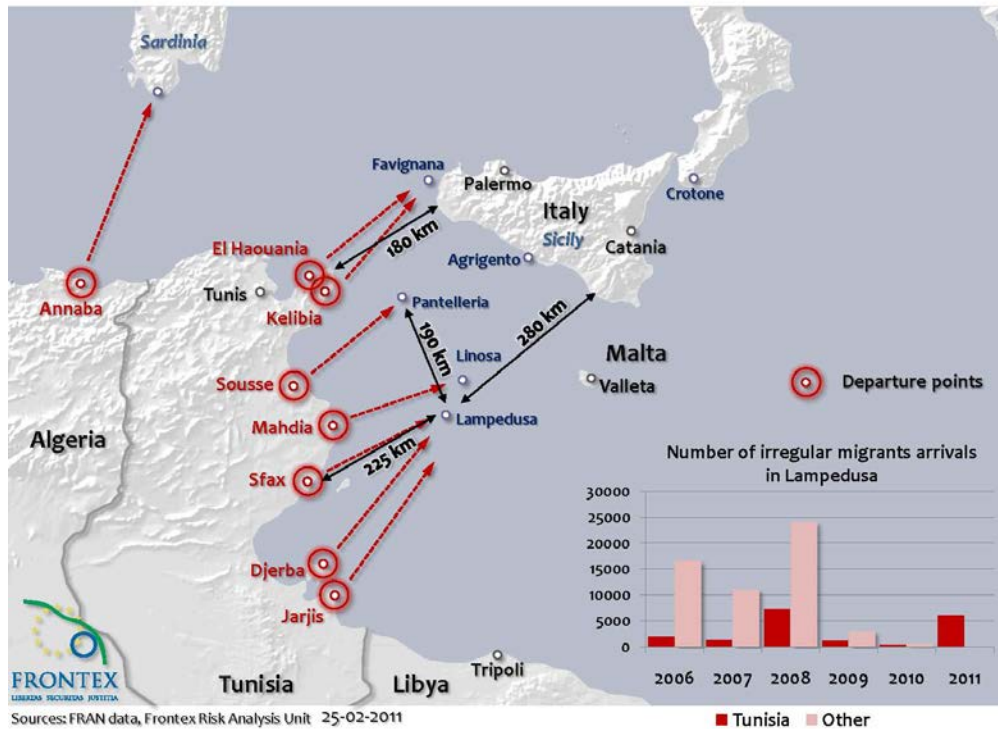


Fig 4. Tunisian Major Departure Points to Lampedusa and Sicily

In the midst of the uprising, the port city of Zarzis, which is located in the southeastern part of Tunisia, became a popular “migration hub.” From Zarzis, young Tunisian migrants escaped towards Lampedusa, only 162 miles away. It is estimated that 6,300 departures took place from Zarzis and its neighboring areas between January 15 to January 30, 2011, with an average of 400 departures per day (Boubakri 2013:4-5). The departure points quickly spread to other locations and ports in Tunisia, such as Sfax, Mahdia, and the Cap Bon region. Departures were organized openly and publicly in a number of ports along the coastlines with migrants paying people smugglers between \$500 to \$1,000 US, and many were even ferried free of charge. In less than three months, January to March 2011, more than 25,000 Tunisians arrived in Lampedusa (Frontex 2011). In the meantime, hundreds of thousands of sub-Saharan Africans and other

migrant workers fled the Libyan civil war, and for the first time in its history, Tunisia itself had to deal with unprecedented refugee and humanitarian crises due to the massive number of civilians coming from Libya in February 2011. In three months, February to May 2011, 885,000 people from Libya crossed borders towards neighboring countries, half of whom entered Tunisia: 48,500 were Tunisians, 208,000 were Libyans, and 185,000 were nationals of third countries (IOM 2011:1).

As I discussed earlier, the massive and immediate character of these migratory flows towards Italy had causes ranging from political instability to high levels of corruption, rampant unemployment, and economic insecurity, and the widespread security relaxation and state of lawlessness following the fall of the Ben Ali regime. A large number of Tunisian security forces, such as police and the National Guard had abandoned their police stations, many of which had been burned down, since they themselves had become targets of attack and violence during the 2011 uprising. Only the Tunisian army remained a visible force of law and order, attempting to protect the territory and its coastline. During this atmosphere of extreme lawlessness, migrant traffickers were able to operate openly, transporting young male migrants, minors included, on old fishing vessels to Lampedusa. At this time, migrants arriving on Lampedusa included different categories of people. Of the Tunisians, some were economic refugees aspiring to better life opportunities in the EU while others may have been involved with the Ben Ali regime and were fleeing potential persecution—a status that enabled them to file for political asylum. The human flows coming from Libya were, however, refugees fleeing an ongoing war, many of whom fell under the UN's 1951 Refugee Convention and were, therefore, humanitarian cases entitled to international protection.

The 2011 wave of migrants arriving in Lampedusa sparked a diplomatic conflict between Rome and Tunis when an Italian minister proposed sending Italian police forces to Tunisia to stop this migration. The Tunisian government condemned Rome for interfering with its sovereignty, pushing Italy to seek EU assistance from the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex). This organization manages cooperation between national border guards that is undertaken to secure the external borders of the EU, and it oversees issues of “illegal migration,” human trafficking, and terrorist infiltration. Frontex was put in charge of patrolling the Sicilian channel. On the Tunisian side, surveillance activities were undertaken by the Tunisian coast guard and navy during the two months following the uprising. These activities succeeded in intercepting and returning thousands of migrants back to Tunisia, with 64,000 detections recorded in the central Mediterranean area (Frontex 2012).

Despite these measures by the Italian and the Tunisian governments, migrant arrivals of many nationalities continued to fill up Lampedusa, quickly reconfiguring the socio-cultural and demographic landscape of the island. Not surprisingly, its residents protested in various ways against the congestion, the chaos, and their overall state of anxiety and panic. Prime Minister Berlusconi reacted immediately and visited Lampedusa, vowing to solve the problem by transferring the migrants within 60 hours to detention centers in mainland Italy. He also promised an immediate, enforced repatriation of most of these migrants to Tunisia and Libya. “In 48 to 60 hours, Lampedusa will be inhabited only by Lampedusans,” said Berlusconi (Kington 2011). As discussed in the Introduction, this was unlawful decision and a serious human rights violation that breached the non-*refoulement* principle.

[T]he principle of non-refoulement has crystallized into a rule of customary law, the core element of which is prohibition of return in any manner whatsoever of

refugees to countries where they may face persecution. The scope and application of the [customary] rule are determined by [its] essential purpose, thus regulating State action wherever it takes place, whether internally, at the border or through its agents outside territorial jurisdiction (Goodwin-Gill 1996:143).

Amnesty International stated that a

“Humanitarian emergency” demands a humanitarian response, not a law and order one. Boats carrying migrants and asylum-seekers from Tunisia, Egypt or other North African countries must not be pushed back. Everyone arriving is entitled to be treated with dignity, to be granted assistance as well as access to a fair asylum procedure” (Amnesty International 2011).

However, the Italian public did not perceive of the Tunisian migrants as vulnerable; rather, they were considered counter-figures to the “refugee,” i.e., a rebellious group that had escaped Tunisia in search of better economic opportunities in Europe (Vaughan-Williams 2011). Italians made many complaints about the migrants’ “excessive” demands and “exaggerated complaints” about their reception on the island, the poor living conditions in the centers, and the low quality of food. The Italian public was also concerned about the fights that Tunisian migrants had with center personnel and refugees of other nationalities, especially the Libyans (Fieldnotes 07/15/2014). This portrayal of Tunisians as pseudo-refugees was used by the Italian government to criminalize their entry into the country, support the notion that the country was being overwhelmed by an unsustainable number of migrants, and encourage their repatriation, a stance that garnered the support of the *Lega Nord* (Senato della Repubblica, 2011b: VIII).

Irregular migrants, the subject of this research, constituted yet another group of migrants. In comparison with asylum seekers, regular migrants, and trafficked persons, irregular migrants have no clear status or form of protection and are often unable to access their basic rights. By living outside the law, they are unable to access humanitarian treatment. Although differences among migrants enable the state to determine whether individuals are eligible or ineligible to claim certain rights associated with their status, these decisions remain very difficult to apply in

practice because migration has a dynamic and fluid character. As I will demonstrate in later chapters, the status of illegality, such as that given to the irregular migrants to Lampedusa, may change over time and overlap with the status of legality (Duvell, 2006, Mitsilegas 2004).

III. Italian Migration Policies from the 1970s to the Present

Migration policies, such as border restrictions, police interventions, and state asylum policies, can play a crucial role in shaping both regular and irregular migration movements (Brochmann and Hammar 1999; Castles, De Haas and Miller 2014; Collyer, 2006). Since 1990, Italy and other European states have implemented anti-immigration policies and legislation (Rusconi 2010), with Italian policies and laws often based on the prevailing idea that migrants, as a whole, are involved with the illegal and underground labor market (Zincone and Caponio 2006). World attitude toward migrants shifted after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, and countries such as Italy have since developed tougher migration laws and stricter internal and external border-control policies, thereby turning the phenomenon of irregular migration into a “security issue.” The terrorist activities of the Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS) continue to boost xenophobic feelings in the European public, allowing for the political criminalization of irregular migrants to become normalized. Most recently, attention has shifted towards the possible risks for national security, due to the political turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, especially the unstable situation in Libya and Syria. The proliferation of jihadist movements is considered to be a direct threat to the security of Europe, which increased the surveillance of the Mediterranean and implemented stricter migration policies.

Due to its economic instability and xenophobic politics, Italy has become increasingly restrictive in terms of its migration laws and border control policies (Campesi 2011; Teitelbaum

& Weiner 1995; Valtolina 2010). According to many scholars, migration in Italy, in addition to being a major policy issue, is still characterized by a “politically opportunistic stance” and a “short-term and emergency-based approach” (Bonifazi 2000; Boswell 2003; Campesi 2011). In order to scrutinize these inconsistencies and the poor design of these policies, it is necessary to describe and examine the origin and evolution of the Italian migration legal framework. This section begins with a review of main legislation and policies⁹ with a focus on the background and circumstances of their development and evolution. I then discuss the recent policy debate on migration in response to the popular uprisings in North Africa.

i. Law 39/1990 *Legge Martelli*

The 1990 *Legge Martelli* was the first legislation passed by the Italian government to manage migration flows to Italy. For the first time in the nation’s history, most foreign nationals had to obtain residence permits in order to reside legally in Italy (Rusconi 2010: 4). This act also reformed legal procedures for the recognition of asylum-seekers and the expulsion of irregular migrants, as well as introducing sanctions for migrant smugglers (Rusconi 2010:4). Under this act, some aspects of the Italian asylum-seeking procedures were revised, allowing non-Europeans to seek asylum in the country (Rusconi 2010: 4-5). The act also implemented new regularization schemes and recognized the demand for a foreign workforce, setting up an annual “Planned Contingent” of legal entries of foreign workers (Rusconi 2010: 4-5). These regularization procedures functioned according to quotas based on migrants’ ability to secure places in the job market. Irregular migrants got two-year, renewable permits of stay that were contingent upon continued employment. Migrants who remained in Italy after the expiration of

⁹ Most Italian migration laws bear the names of their promoters, with each one grounded in the one that precedes it. Thus, these laws present a certain continuity in their implementation and development, despite the frequent changes in Italian political programs and government alliances.

their permits were considered “illegal immigrants” and liable for expulsion. As I will later demonstrate, these restrictive regularization policies did not stop the irregular migration phenomenon but, paradoxically, fueled the desire of Tunisians to enter Italy with the help of various smuggling networks.

ii. Law 40/1998 *Legge Turco-Napolitano*

In the early 1990s, the civil war in Somalia and the breakdown of the former Yugoslavia and Albania transformed Italy into a host nation for irregular migrants and asylum-seekers. The EU claimed that the Italian borders were too “porous” and asked Italy to regulate them in accordance with the 1995 Schengen Convention, which allowed EU citizens of signatory states to travel across EU borders without passports. The aim of these regulations was to implement tighter border-control policies in order to protect EU member states against irregular migration. In the second half the 1990s, Italy implemented various legal provisions to curb the influx of irregular migrants by enacting the “*Turco–Napolitano*” law. This law regulated many aspects of migration, such as migrants’ rights and the protection of their claims to services. Under this law, a migrant who was employed could apply for a *carta di soggiorno* (permanent residency permit) and even have the opportunity to apply for Italian citizenship after ten years of legal residency in the country (Bertocchi and Strozzi 2010). In addition, Italian citizenship was also granted to foreigners who married an Italian national and have resided legally in Italy for at least six months. In general, this law was aimed at fostering integration and multicultural initiatives by providing rights and duties to migrant workers in Italy so that their protection from exploitation could be guaranteed (Wexler 2007).

However, new repressive measures were implemented to put a halt to irregular entries and to make repatriation procedures more operational. Thus, the *Centri di Permanenza Temporanea*

(the Centers for Temporary Detention) for irregular migrants were created in the mid-1990s; these centers hosted the migrants for a 30-day detention period to ensure identification until their deportation could be recognized (Cardia 2011, Cheli 2010). Despite its modification in 2002, this Act remains the main legal vehicle for regulating, at the national level, all aspects of migration, including irregular migration, migrants' fundamental rights, and entitlement to services (Finotelli and Sciortino 2009:123-124).

iii. Law 189/2002 *Legge Bossi-Fini*

The extreme right party, the *Lega Nord* (Northern League), was founded in 1991 for the purpose of transforming Italy into a federal state with a greater regional autonomy, especially for northern regions (Corriere della Sera 2002a: 4; Palidda 2009). Operating under the former Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, the party developed an anti-immigrant, security rhetoric which gradually became the main agenda of their political campaigns. The party took a tough position on irregular migration, especially from Muslim countries, to protect the "Christian identity" of Italy and Europe. The party is still widely known to be xenophobic and anti-immigrant (Biorcio 1999; Palidda 2009; Woods 2010).

In 2002, the *Lega Nord* was influential in imposing a new law called "*Bossi-Fini*" (n. 189/2002) that made it extremely difficult for undocumented migrants to enter Italy and acquire regular permits. This law is named after Umberto Bossi, secretary of the *Lega Nord*, and Gianfranco Fini, secretary of a right-wing party, *Alleanza Nazionale* (National Alliance). With regards to security measures, the "*decreto-sbarchi*" (sea landings decree) gave the Italian navy the right to control and push back any boat suspected to be carrying clandestine immigrants heading to Lampedusa. As well, both the navy and local police could carry out all border-control activities, including expulsions (Veugelers 1994). Thus any migrant found in international waters

could be immediately sent back to his or her country of origin. Irregular migrants, caught by police on Italian soil without the required documentation, were automatically identified, detained, and deported to their countries of origin. Further, for migrants who did make into the country, the 30-day temporary detention for identification purposes was prolonged to a maximum of 60 days. As well, a residency permit required both a job contract and rental agreement that had to be presented to the authorities. Delvino states: “This law brought stricter conditions for migrants to reside, work and access public services and strengthened measures against irregular migration, including providing for its criminalization” (Delvino 2014: 4). Moreover, no entry for employment could take place before a job offer has been obtained, abolishing the possibility of granting permits for the purpose of searching for employment. However, *Bossi-Fini* did not stop the inflow of migrants into the Italian population. As Rusconi notes, “Despite the restrictive provisions of the law, the largest regularization ever granted in Europe occurred under it, and 634,728 people were regularized during the right-wing government” (Rusconi 2010:2-7). Frontex complemented the Bossi-Fini Act in 2005 when it started operations. This organization implements various actions to combat irregular migration, such as external border surveillance and patrol activities by land, sea, and air. It also works in close contact with the EU’s law enforcement agency, the European Police Office (Europol) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (Cepol), which brings together senior European police officers for cross-border co-operation.

iv. Security Set 94/2009 *Pacchetto Sicurezza*

In May 2008, the Italian Interior Minister, concerned about the persistent and extraordinary influx of non-EU citizens, declared a “state of emergency,” which launched the 2009 “*Pacchetto Sicurezza*” (Security Package). This bill made it a crime to enter or stay in Italy without the

proper documents such as a visa or the residency permit (Rusconi 2010). Irregular entry and stay became a crime punishable by law, making irregular migrants liable to detention by the authorities for more than six months with a fine ranging from 5,000 to 10,000 Euros. Accordingly, all public officers and public workers, including postmen and ticket controllers on public transit, had to now report the presence of an illegal immigrant to the police or run the risk of facing criminal charges themselves. In addition, anyone who knowingly rented property to an irregular migrant is liable to a prison sentence of up to three years (Monzini 2007). A number of new penalties were enforced, such as the “mandatory arrest and fast track trial for foreigners who remain in Italy notwithstanding an expulsion order,” and fines were issued for illegal entry (WGAD 2009, Merlino 2009:7-8). Police actions were augmented by military interventions and citizen “*rondes*” (patrols), organized by civilian associations to notify security forces of any suspicious acts or social unrest caused by irregular migrants.

Monzini writes:

In 2009, Italy instituted a set of legislations criminalizing the movement and residence of irregular migrants. These laws have made irregular entry or stay a crime, punishable by a fine from between 5,000 to 10,000 Euros. In addition, being present irregularly in the country has been made an aggravating circumstance for migrants who commit an offence. Also, civil servants and public employees (doctors, teachers and municipal employees) are obliged to report irregular migrants to the police or face criminal charges. In addition, anyone who knowingly rents property to a migrant in an irregular situation is liable to a prison sentence of up to three years. The law also allows civilian vigilantes (known as *ronde*) to conduct organized patrols in order to alert police to public order offences or suspected criminals. While these vigilante groups would not have the power of arrest, critics of the law fear that it will enable extremist groups to embark on campaigns of violence and intimidation against migrants in Italy” (Monzini 2007:19).

Finally, the Centers for Temporary Detention were renamed “*Centri di identificazione ed espulsione*” (Centers for Identification and Expulsion) and the detention term of irregular migrants was extended from 60 to 180 days (Merlino: 2009). These measures have many

implications not only in terms of the public perception of migrants as a cause of crime and security problems, but also in terms of exacerbating feelings of anxiety, xenophobia, and distrust among the Italian population.

v. “North African Emergency”: Recent Policies

The historic migration of Tunisians landing on Lampedusa was framed in a context of invasion and emergency, fueling the anxiety of authorities and the Italian public. Italy committed itself “to engage in extraordinary and urgent measures in order to provide humanitarian assistance in North Africa, while ensuring the effective fight against illegal migration within the national territory” (*Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* 2011b). Faced with this “exceptional influx” (*Consiglio dei Ministri* 2011a), Italy turned to the EU, requesting immediate assistance in dealing with this migration crisis, claiming the “burden sharing” rule of the Schengen area. In April, 2011, the Italian government nominated the national Department of Civil Protection as the managing unit for the “refugee crisis” in relation to the “North Africa Emergency” (Garelli et al. 2013) This was an unexpected action since the Department of Civil Protection’s task is to cover natural catastrophes, such as forest fires, floods, volcano eruptions, and earthquakes, and not to manage issues pertaining to migrants and refugees (Garelli et al. 2013: 1008). The EU reacted with a security-based solution: “Joint Operation (JO) Hermes 2011.” Frontex would patrol the Sicilian channel to prevent more influx of irregular migrants and to manage their repatriation procedures. Other important objectives of this operation were to deter the increasing number of human smugglers, considered to be the primary facilitators of irregular migration in the Mediterranean. From the beginning of JO Hermes 2011 until February 2012, 165 traffickers were arrested by the Italian authorities (Frontex 2012). However, according to the UNHCR,

despite all the effort deployed, more than 1,500 people lost their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea in 2011 (Fleming 2015).

Interestingly, during the period between February and May 2011, a clear-cut distinction emerged between “Tunisians hence clandestines” and “Libyans hence war refugees” (Garelli et al. 2013: 1012). This negative perspective of Tunisians negatively affected Italian willingness to help them. Although, on April 5, 2011, the Italian government decided to grant a six-month temporary protection visa for Tunisian migrants entering Italy between January 1 and April 5, 2011 (Consiglio dei Ministri 2011b), this exceptional and special visa was not a path to claiming refugee status. Rather, it was a form of temporary international protection that Italy offered to qualifying Northern Africans, mainly Tunisians. As such, approximately 25,000 Tunisians migrants were granted temporary protection status and, *in principle*, free circulation within the Schengen area (Pascouau 2011:1).

The Italian right-wing party, *Lega Nord* objected and insisted on the immediate repatriation of irregular migrants. The *Lega* parliamentarian, Lorenzo Bodega, declared,

The anxiety felt by many Italians, who fear the arrival of potential terrorist fugitives or mere profiteers exploiting the confusion in order to land in Italy in the guise of refugees, is justified. Maroni is therefore right to request support from Europe. This should not be used to facilitate the stay of abusive migrants but should be used to encourage their repatriation (Senato della Repubblica 2011b: VIII).

The *Lega Nord* and the Italian government continuously blamed the European Union for not taking a strong stance on the issue of migration and for failing to support Italy in what was a totally unmanageable situation (Geddes 2008: 358).

This six-month temporary protection visa issued in April 2011 also created diplomatic tensions between France and Italy, with the former blaming the latter for not complying with the rules of the Schengen Agreement. The majority of migrants landing in Italy were transiting to

France and Germany where they had family and social ties. France criticized the Italian authorities for laxity and objected to the entry of Tunisians into its territory, quickly creating checkpoints on its border with Italy to catch and turn back migrants. Finally, the interior ministers of both countries agreed to increase cooperation to ease the stream of migrants across the Mediterranean (Donadio 2011). French Interior Minister told the French parliament that between February 23, 2011, and March 28, 2011, French authorities intercepted 2,800 Tunisian migrants, 1,700 of whom were deported back to Italy (Giuffrida 2011). As a reaction, Umberto Bossi—head of the powerful, xenophobic *Lega Nord*—boasted that, when the immigrants arrive, “we will just send them to France and Germany” (Der Spiegel 2011).

On April 5, 2011, Italy signed an agreement with Tunisia to combat irregular migration. The agreement committed the Tunisian authorities to strengthen controls on departures and to accept the accelerated return procedures for Tunisians arriving after April 5. Those migrants who had come to Italy before April 5 were granted a temporary permit as required by law. During the period between April and October 2011, the Italian government with the help of Tunisian consular authorities returned 3,385 Tunisian nationals to Tunisia (Ministero dell’Interno, 2011e). In October 2013, Italy enacted the “Operation Mare Nostrum (OMN)” (Operation Our Sea) immigration policy (Faiola 2014). OMN was a military and humanitarian operation for the southern Mediterranean aimed at tackling the “exceptional influx of migrants” coming into the country through Italy's southern border (Camera dei Deputati 2014, Matassa 2014). Between October 2013 and August 2014, OMN rescued over 115,000 people, mostly refugees, and transferred them to Italian territory. During the same period, about 2,000 people were estimated to have lost their lives in the Mediterranean. Overall, it is estimated that more than 15,000

Tunisians were forcibly returned to Tunisia between 2011 and 2013 (Interview with Tunisian Consul in Palermo).

IV. Italian Migration Laws and Policies: A Critique

As most of these policies demonstrate, the migration debate in Italy was, and continues to be, visibly and exclusively focused on external dimensions such as border control, repatriation, detention, and forced removal, despite Italian legislation that clearly upholds the fundamental rights of irregular migrants. As stipulated in Article 2(1) of the immigration law name of law required, a non-citizen “regardless of how he is present in the territory of the State” should have his fundamental rights respected (Jastram and Achiron 2001). In addition, Article 10 of the Italian Constitution stipulates that foreigners’ legal statuses are regulated by law in conformity with international norms and treaties and endorses the right of non-citizens to political asylum. In addition, Article 13 of the Constitution provides that “personal liberty is inviolable and that detention shall only be allowed for judicial reasons and in a lawful manner” (ICJ 2011). However, despite these constitutional and legal pledges, the Italian Ministry of Interior proceeded to distinguish between various types of non-citizens, with the intention of circumscribing the application of these rights to certain groups of non-citizens. The ministry’s website indicated:

Foreigners who entered Italy without a regular entry visa are illegal immigrants. Foreigners who lost the conditions necessary to stay in Italy (i.e. expired and non-renewable permit of residency held upon entering Italy) are irregular immigrants. According to regulations in force, illegal immigrants must be removed (Di Martino et al. 2013).

Forced deportation in international waters was, and is, a violation of Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which states: “Every man is free to leave his land.” The international agreements that preclude those forced deportations include the 1950

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms and the 1990 UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families.

Returning boats back into the open sea allowed Italian officials to prevent migrants' access to any humanitarian protection and their potential request for political asylum. Right-wing parties greeted these forced deportations with approval, especially *Lega Nord*, which encouraged detention as well as massive deportation and expulsion at the borders. Although Italian law allows authorities to detain non-citizens under certain conditions, a number of experts argue that the Italian authorities consistently have detained non-citizens outside the framework of the law (Masera 2012). These unlawful detention procedures have created situations in which migrants are frequently held for unlimited periods of time without the presence of a legal authority or any legal information. It is also important to note that living conditions in detention centers are extremely difficult; detained migrants have often complained about poor hygiene, overcrowdedness, and lack of translators who can help them get their needs met. As I will demonstrate in Chapters 5 and 7, various cases of abuse and violence have often been reported and documented. In fact, a number of Tunisian detainees have organized various riots to protest these conditions. While many have escaped, others have attempted to commit suicide or threatened to immolate themselves (field notes 2014-2015).

These criminalization procedures, forced detentions, and removals have had many unfortunate repercussions. Irregular migrants are fearful of accessing public services and thus unable to enjoy some of their legal entitlements. Increased "illegality" has resulted in more sophisticated smuggling techniques, the adoption of new, dangerous migratory sea routes, and more tragedies in the Mediterranean Sea (Monzini et al. 2006). Migrants' inability to legally access the Italian labor market has increased the number of irregular entries who work in

underground and illicit work activities. As Zincone notes, “the policy of closing the front door of legal entry, while keeping the back door for illegal entry half open” made possibilities for legal work almost inexistent (Zincone 1998:17) and created what Reyneri calls the “underground economy trap” (Reyneri 1998: 313-331). This also happened extensively under the 1990 *Legge Martelli*, as I have discussed earlier, when various legalization measures were instituted within a short-term and emergency framework, rather than through an effective policy that operated within a clear legal framework (Nascimbene 2000). These legalization measures have forced migrants to create illegal ways to remain in Italy, such as forging documents when they fear lapsing into “illegal” status because of job loss. As Lidia Santos (1993: 111) aptly put it, “this is an institutionalized irregularity.”

The relationship between legal status and legal employment has created a dilemma for migrants because legal status is the only precondition for legal employment and, therefore, for the preservation of the legal status. When legalized migrants fail to find, or maintain, legal employment, they are prevented from securing renewals of their residency permits and automatically fall into a state of illegality (Reyneri 1998).

Furthermore, the Tunisian popular uprising and the ensuing unprecedented, migration crisis has further intensified Italian discourse about security and migrants. As Zolberg puts it, a sense of crisis emerges from a perceptible upsurge in the burden that migrants inflict on a host community (Zolberg 1989: 415). This sense of crisis often is intensified by right wing, populist rhetoric which is increasingly widespread not only in Italy, but also in other European countries (Guibernau 2010). Far right, extreme political parties throughout Europe often treat “foreigners” as the single, most pervasive challenge to the receiving society and often frame this position vis-à-vis migration as a “threat” or “crisis.” This prevailing anti-migration rhetoric in the public

sphere has always been a determining factor for the extreme right to win elections. As Geddes states, “politicians may want to be seen to build the fortress because when immigration is a salient issue, there are likely to be votes in seeking ‘zero immigration’” (Geddes 2000 27). According to a recent survey in Europe showed that Italy’s population had the greatest concern about the migration phenomenon with security foremost in citizens’ minds (Crumley 2011, Valtolina 2010).

Unfortunately, international humanitarian organizations and UN programs for migrants can address certain issues, such as the rights of migrant workers, refugee cases, and the treatment of detained irregular migrants, but they have little influence as to whether states will adopt or alter particular migration policies. I argue that the issue of migrants’ human rights is limited in scope because, as the Italian case demonstrates, the final enactment and enforcement of these policies continue to remain within the domestic political system of receiving societies. As Zolberg (1999) claims, states are the most important actors with respect to migratory movements; their existing national migration policies shape whether these movements will be expansive or restrictive. State sovereignty is also crucial in its enactment of migration policies deemed appropriate, thereby making it difficult to dismiss the importance of the nation-state and national citizenship.

However, some scholars (Howard 2009, Soysal 1994) are now discussing the decline of the sovereignty of nation-states. For example, Soysal believes in the power of the “post-national model,” arguing that various instruments and international institutions, e.g., the European Court of Human Rights and UNHCR, act as effective global forces that are capable of influencing some European states to be more open to dealing with various cases of political asylum, family reunification, and so forth. Her example is France, where recent, restrictive laws concerning the

nationality code, family reunification, and illegal migration were quickly opposed by international civil rights groups, as well as prominent cabinet members in the French Government (Soysal 1994). However, Soysal (1994) and Geddes (2008) also point out that European migration policies remain highly restrictive when it comes to potential flows of irregular migrants and is also discriminatory vis-à-vis certain categories of individuals such as women and persons of color (Geddes 2008; Lahav and Guiraudon 2000; Soysal 1994).

I approve that the post-national model may serve a certain category of immigrants such as bona-fide political refugees and individuals seeking family reunification. Yet, I argue that it will be unlikely to include other categories of migrants such as the “irregulars” of this study because the boundaries of citizenship and nationhood are still drawn by the nation-states, and not by universal laws, human rights charters, and global conventions. The impact of these laws, charters, and conventions on state policies is not always as powerful as it may seem because they depend on ratification by individual states—an outcome that does not always occur, e.g., Italy breaching the *non-refoulement* principle, making the efficacy of these instruments negligible. Thus the influence of global institutions is mainly confined to human rights commitments on asylum and family reunification with little challenge to the sovereign state, which remains the sole guarantor of migrants’ rights and the main designer of either expansionary or exclusionary policies. Although the concept of post-nationalism is being discussed within the discourse concerning universal human rights and principles, the nation-state model remains significant in its power over migration law, sovereignty, territory, and citizenry (Sassen, 2006; Benhabib, 2001). As Favell writes, “[the] nation-state point of view of spatial mobility is (still) the dominant conventional view of the world” (Favell, 2007: 271).

V. Conclusion

In this chapter, I first provided a brief historical overview of Tunisian migration, focusing on its various historical phases from the early 1940s post-war period until the 2011 Tunisian uprising. I then turned to the recent history of Tunisian migration to Italy and the various circumstances that have led to the emergence of the irregular migratory phenomenon. The second part of the chapter describes a summary of Italian migration laws and policies, examining their origin and evolution from the 1990 *Legge Martelli* until the recent popular uprising in North Africa. I critically evaluated these laws by examining their inconsistencies on aspects such as admission criteria, citizenship, and migrants' rights. It became clear that Italian migration laws and policies have often oscillated between a politically opportunistic stance and a short-term, emergency-based approach. I paid particular attention to the implementation of each law and policy and its impact on the growing politicization of migration in Italy and Europe as a whole. I paid particular attention to their ad hoc nature, their socio-legal dimensions, and the way in which they contributed to the emergence of the irregular migration phenomenon as a “security issue” that has to be managed by security agencies such as Europol or Frontex, among others. I demonstrated how the growing politicization of migration in Europe has occurred at a time when Europeans started to perceive the phenomenon as a challenge to the very idea of their nation-states. In turn, the EU and Italy's management of the North African crisis has negatively affected the legal status and mobility of Tunisian migrants, by creating new “illegal” entries and situations. The strict, border-control procedures implemented by Italy and other EU member states have pushed migrants and refugees ever closer towards new and perilous situations of human trafficking and dangerous forms of border crossing. I concluded the chapter by arguing that migration policies are exclusively drafted by the nation-states despite the emergence of the

post-national model and the increasing relevance of international agreements concerning human rights. The migrant population of this study is subjected to laws and boundaries of citizenship and nationhood that are drawn by the Italian state and not by universal laws on human rights and human mobility.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

“...tales in search of an excuse for their telling.”
— John Van Maanen, *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*

I. Introduction

Much research in anthropology and other fields is being undertaken to better understand the recent transnational migration and refugee phenomena within the context of an increasingly complex and interconnected world. A main question for researchers is: What methodological approaches and strategies are appropriate when conducting transnational research? As I discussed in the Introduction, I decided to undertake multi-sited, ethnographic, migration research for the purpose of studying a specific set of Tunisian irregular migrants in Italy. This chapter covers the methodological frameworks and tools used for this ethnography, which was undertaken from June 2013 to October 2014 in Tunisia and Italy. It includes the following: 1) the rationale for my multi-sited, ethnographic perspective; 2) a detailed description of the data collection process; 3) a description of the multiple methods used to collect data; 4) an explanation of my data analysis and management strategies; and 5) a reflection upon my research experience as a Tunisian anthropologist conducting fieldwork in both my native country and a foreign host country.

II. Research Setting and Methods

In this research, I employed a mixture of qualitative ethnographic methods: archival research, participant observation, and open-ended interviews, all of which generated a valuable set of narratives. The use of this multi-sited, qualitative approach to data gathering allowed for a multi-dimensional analysis and, overall, an enhancement of the process for crosschecking the data.

i. Multi-sited Locales

I undertook my research in two sets of locations: 1) the Tunisia set, which included three districts of the Tunisian township of حي التضامن (Hay Ettadhamen), i.e., Dawar Hicher, El Intilaka and El Mniihla; and 2) the Italian set, which included the island of Lampedusa and four provinces on the island of Sicily, i.e., Agrigento, Trapani, Palermo, and Sciacca. These multiple sites were chosen to increase the variety of the sample size and to ensure enhanced validity of the research.



Fig 5. The 2 rims of the Mediterranean: Tunisia, Lampedusa, Sicily

The first set, the Tunisian township of Hay Ettadhamen and its three districts, was an important site because I was thoroughly familiar with its culture, having had extended social networks in it and connections with a number of local NGOs and youth community organizations. The township is 1) home both migrants deported back to Tunisia between 2011 and 2014 and irregular migrant candidates; and 2) a place where migratory attempts take place, creating a well-defined “migration culture” that characterizes its districts. In addition, I had been able to nurture friendly, long-lasting relationships with a number of its youth during ethnographic fieldwork that I undertook for my M.A. in 2005.¹⁰ I remained in good contact with many of them. Finally, the NGOs in Hay Ettadhamen, such as Endra Inter-Arabe for which I worked in 1996, were valuable sources of archival data and also acted as institutions through which I gained easy access to potential participants.

¹⁰ This fieldwork resulted in the thesis, “The Motivations of Tunisian Men to Migrate to Italy: An Ethnographic Study of the Hay Ettadhamen Township.”

The second set of field sites included two Italian islands: Lampedusa and Sicily with its four major provinces. These islands are important research sites for this study because many Tunisians who crossed the Mediterranean landed there, and the islands hold large communities of irregular migrants and refugees who came from Tunisia, North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa.

The fieldwork process, which included identifying potential participants and data collection, took place over a 16-month period between 2013 and 2015. Data collection consisted of four main phases of inquiry, i.e., Tunisia-Sicily/Lampedusa-Tunisia. This ethnographic expedition required a 16-month residence and travels within, and between, the two sets of sites. I spent seven months in Hay Ettadhamen from June to December 2013 and the nine months from April to October 2014 in Sicily and Lampedusa. I returned to Tunis by the end of October 2014 and remained there conducting data analysis. This extended period of time was sufficient to establish significant relationships with Tunisian irregular migrants in order to explore their life experiences, including the oppression they faced and the various strategies that they adopted to resist it.

To provide a more comprehensive background for the study population so that readers can gain more understanding about it, I now offer detailed description of the field sites.

1. Hay Ettadhamen

Hay Ettadhamen is an Arabic term, which literally means “solidarity township.” It is located about six kilometers west of the capital city of Tunis. For sampling purposes, the data in Hay Ettadhamen was collected in the three main districts of Dawar Hicher, El Intilaka and El Mnhla as each district possessed different characteristics. Dawar Hicher is a poor, urban, crowded district known for overpopulation, unemployment, violence, and crimes. El Intilaka is located at the entrance of Hay Ettadhamen and is relatively less crowded and equipped with schools and facilities such as a metro line. El Mnhla, in the countryside, represents Tunisian village life, replete with chickens, donkeys, *tabounas* (clay, bread-

making ovens), women in their *malyas* (Berber traditional dress), and so forth. The inhabitants of El Mnihla are the least adapted to urban life (Kaaki 2003:300-305).

The township of Hay Ettadhamen emerged between 1970 and 1985 when rural migrants, mainly from the western part of Tunisia, who were searching for better life opportunities (Kaaki 2003), erected hundreds of informal settlements. Long-time residents recall that, in the late 1960s, Hay Ettadhamen was a massive colonial farm with olive trees and grass for sheep grazing (Khedher 2007). Due to continuous settlements and high population growth, Hay Ettadhamen became the most heavily populated region in Tunisia with a 2010 population density of 24,560 inhabitants per square kilometer (NIS: 2010).

The neighborhood was substantially transformed after the 2011 uprising—a transformation that included the growth of informal businesses, poverty, pollution, religious extremism, prostitution, gang-related violence, drugs, and alcoholism. A number of study participants felt that their situation had deteriorated after the 2011 uprising because of escalating living costs, unemployment rates, crime, rampant corruption, drug addiction, and clandestine migration. Many of these youth are perceived by mainstream Tunisian society as troublemakers, drug addicts, and criminals. Taoufik, a 28-year-old student commented,

We are now living in a different era than that of the pre-uprising. We have no aspirations or hopes for the future. One has no option but to survive, and the way to do it is by getting enough money to pay for a *harqa*¹¹ to Lampedusa (Interview 07/2013).

Another problem is a recently escalated religious fundamentalism. Indeed, I was shocked by the dramatic increase in Salafist Islam, a phenomenon that has become bound up with the shared social consciousness and the self-image of some youth. The Salafist phenomenon has grown exponentially since the Tunisian uprising and gained significant local and international media attention. In fact, many informants stated that they knew of a few young men from their *Houma* (neighborhood) who went to Syria for *jihad*. Ahmed, a 25-year old mechanic from Hay Ettadhamen, recounts,

¹¹ *Harqa* is the Tunisian word for irregular migration used by all Tunisians.

A number of Salafists are harmless, but others are very dangerous. These ones have the backing of *Al Nahdha* (the moderate Islamist political party). Nobody can touch them or interfere with them. These are the extremists who tarnished the reputation of our township and the whole country. They have to be severely persecuted because they can brainwash a number of innocent young men and eventually pave the way for *Daesh* (ISIS) to infiltrate into our country (Interview 05/2013).

What is happening in Hay Ettadhamen resonates with many others in townships surrounding Tunis, such as Hay Hlel, Ezzahrouni, El Mallacine, and EL Kabbariyya, where the levels of socio-economic disparities were more distinct and thus frustration was rampant, especially after the uprising.

2. Sicily

Sicily, the largest island in the Mediterranean, is located south of the Italian Peninsula and has an area of 9,927 square miles and a population of 5,082 million. The island is visited regularly by tourists and is home to important archaeological and ancient sites. With its coastal towns, congested cities, and multi-ethnic population, Sicily is an island where the boundaries between east and west, Europe and Africa, Christian and Muslim seem to blur. Because of its close proximity to Tunisia, the movement of Sicilians to Tunisia and Tunisians to Sicily has a long history, involving different categories of people such as missionaries, merchants, fishermen, peasants, service workers, students, and recently irregular migrants. The presence of Italians in pre-colonial Tunisia was documented by Ganiage, who estimated that, by the time of Tunisia's independence in 1956, there were 255,000 Europeans in Tunisia, constituting 9 per cent of the total population, and among those, there were 57,000 Italians (Ganiage 1960:15). The Sicilian community arrived in Tunisia between the 19th and 20th centuries, and its members congregated in *La Goulette*, a coastal northern suburb of Tunis where they created an enclave named "*Piccola Sicilia*" (Little Sicily). The impact of Italian culture in Tunisia is still visible, including linguistic, architectural, and gastronomical influences. On the other hand, the influence of Arab and North African culture are also still visible in many parts of Sicily as a result of the 200-year Muslim conquest of the island. For example,

Muslim architectural patterns can be seen in the intertwined arches and Arabic inscriptions in the main cathedral of Palermo, which was a mosque during the Muslim rule.

a. Palermo

The Sicilian capital, Palermo, which is closer to Tunis than to Rome, is the biggest city on the island, but also its poorest. It is the fifth largest city in Italy, with a population of 654,858 in the urban area and 1.2 million in the metropolitan area (Lo Piccolo and Leone 2008). As a mecca for conquest throughout history, the city has architectural and cultural traces of the invasions of Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, and Spanish. It was also a key cultural and trading center in the Mediterranean. As Zaccaria puts it, “The Mediterranean Sea represents a water that licks/laps the lands of three continents; it is a water route that has created and still creates cultural intercourse—even through wars and colonialism—between different populations, economies, ideas, and discourses” (Zaccaria 2011: 10). Unfortunately, Palermo is characterized by crime, high unemployment rates, and an informal economy. Palermo is known for its tourism, agriculture, and services. A number of North African migrants, especially Moroccans and Tunisians, traditionally filled jobs in these sectors. Being the home of the Sicilian Mafia, Palermo is also known for its high levels of corruption, organized crime, and black market and other illicit activities. However, Palermo is continuously transitioning towards a new socio-economic and transnational locality as a result of tourism and the migratory flows that keep shaping its landscape.

I stayed in Palermo for seven months and, due to the large migrant community, I was able to conduct twenty-two interviews and collect a great deal of data. This research was conducted primarily in two main locations: the medieval, impoverished neighborhoods of La Kalsa and Borgo Vecchio,¹² which are both situated in the historical part of Palermo. La Kalsa is a

¹² Both names demonstrate the Arabic influence in Sicily. La Kalsa is derived from the Arabic *Al-Khalisa* (the purest) and Borgo Vecchio, from Arabic *Al Borj* (the tower).

rundown, poor quarter known for crime, drugs, and youth-related violence. Since its rents are low, this neighborhood houses migrant communities, such as Nigerians, Senegalese, Ethiopians, Romas, Tunisians and, most recently, a Bangladeshi costume jewelry, merchant population. La Kalsa is famous because of its narrow labyrinthine streets, lively night life, wandering stray dogs, *rotting piles of rubbish, clotheslines hanging from balconies*, multiple liquor stores, pickpocketing, petty theft, drug dealing, and wall graffiti. Borgo Vecchio is another popular, but poor and congested neighborhood near the port, and is the landing site for hundreds of migrant-rescue disembarkations. The residents are a mix of working-class Italians, Romas, and Tunisian migrants. Like La Kalsa, Al Borgo's graffiti-covered, dilapidated buildings host a number of migrant communities among which are groups of irregular Tunisian migrants. As one local resident jokingly stated, "Al Borgo has become a Tunisian district" As I was conducting my ethnography in these two neighborhoods, I felt an extraordinary sense of connection to them because their smells, colors, and sounds reminded me of Hay Ettadhamen's and other Tunisian neighborhoods 'chaotic, busy streets.

While in Palermo, I also visited Mondello, famous beach destination, to research a small group of Tunisian migrants who lived there. Mondello is a location where many Tunisians hang out and take up odd jobs such as selling lighters and African bracelets to locals and tourists. During the summers, when the beach was crowded, Tunisian irregular migrants were able to find seasonal work in restaurants, pizzerias, and local cafés/bars, washing dishes and helping in the kitchens. Mohamed, a 24-year-old man, told me that a few Tunisians came to Mondello to engage in male prostitution and other paid sexual activities with gay local men and tourists, especially at night behind the bushes. He also added that he knew many who also engaged, at night, in these activities at the central train station in Palermo and in the park near the port. Since he had arrived, Mohamed could not find shelter and had been living in the streets

of Mondello, although occasionally staying at a friend's studio apartment. On Saturdays, he would take the local bus into old-town Palermo to pick up food packages from Caritas and to meet some of his Tunisian and Egyptian friends for a drink.

b. Trapani

Trapani is a town located on the west coast of Sicily that has many North African features, such as its landscape, an Arab-influenced cuisine, and a couscous festival. It also contains almost half the vineyards in Sicily and its local products include wine and high-quality olive oil. Like many other Sicilian towns, Trapani has been shaped by migrant flows that influenced its demography, culture, stories, organization, and its overall landscape. During my fieldwork in Trapani, I was the guest of a Tunisian family who had been in Sicily since the 1980s. They graciously offered me space, food, and time, showing me around and helping me connect with local NGO workers who, in turn, introduced me to a few newly arrived Tunisian migrants. Trapani has an open center, *Centro di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo, known as CARA*, that provides food, medical, legal, and social and psychological assistance for irregular migrants and refugees. As well, newcomers can take Italian lessons and engage in various sports and leisure activities. Zied, a 22-year-old Tunisian migrant, told me that he was able to take carpentry classes. He also informed me that most migrants there made political asylum claims, the majority of which was rejected. CARA also hosts a number of minors and provides them with specialized care such as psychotherapy sessions. Even though the Trapani Center is in much better condition than those of Lampedusa and other towns in Sicily, it lacks facilities such as functional toilets, proper beds, and sufficient showers. Trapani also hosts an infamous detention Center called Milo where a number of migrants are detained in jail-like situations suffering from poor detention conditions such as over-crowdedness, lack of hygiene and violence. I spent fifteen days in Trapani, undertaking 12 open-ended interviews with migrants and having conversations

with locals, CARA's personnel, and NGO staff of the International Organization of Migration (IOM) and the UNHCR.

c. Sciacca

The name Sciacca is derived from the Arabic *xacca* (fracture or crack). An hour and a half away from Palermo by car, Sciacca is a coastal fishing town in southern Sicily. It is known for its delicious, fresh seafood and is famous for its ceramics, thermal springs, religious festivals, and large fishing fleet. Historically, Sciacca was a busy port with a very robust North African trade exchange. The Tunisians living in Sciacca work in the fishing industry as well as in restaurants, cafés/bars, and pizzerias. I spent a week from June 12 to 19, 2014, in Sciacca and was able to interview six Tunisian migrants, i.e., three fishing assistants and three restaurant workers, whose employment was sporadic due to the lack of tourism. At Piazza Scandaliato, the central square, Tunisians and other African migrants, mostly Nigerians and Chadians, wandered around or sat on public benches, simply watching passers-by. Sami, a young Tunisian in his early twenties, was one of the desperate migrants I met in Sciacca. He was hopelessly wandering around an empty beach with a black plastic bag that carried his few clothes and other personal possessions. Sami asked me for money to buy a *panini* (sandwich) and agreed to be interviewed that evening in front of the main church. However, he never showed up. Fabio, a man in his fifties, said "Italy's migration policies are dysfunctional. The floods of migrants and refugees are huge and unmanageable. The detention and reception centers are full. This is what forces thousands of immigrants to live in the streets" (Interview 06/2014).

d. Agrigento

Agrigento is a city of 470,000 people on the southern coast of the Sicilian shore. It is known for its natural landscapes and the Valley of the Temples, a Greek archaeological site, and hosts tourists from both Italy and abroad. Agrigento also has a large migrant community from North Africa, many of whose

members are Moroccans and Tunisians. Agrigento is also the location of the *Centro di permanenza temporanea ed assistenza* “*Contrada S. Benedetto*”, which hosts diverse migrants who have often been transferred from Lampedusa. I spent a week in Agrigento from July 10th to July 17th, 2014 conducting eight interviews with migrants, taking field notes, and interviewing one of the UNHCR staff about the local situation and conditions within the detention center.

3. Lampedusa

As a destination for hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants, Lampedusa, which I have described in Chapter 2, was key to my research. I flew to Lampedusa from Palermo and spent three weeks there from July 18 to August 4, 2014. Due to the depressed economy in the island, most families in Lampedusa rent out a studio or rooms for tourists, and I was able to find accommodations during my stay with a Lampadusan family. When I was in Palermo, I had made an official request to visit the Center in Lampedusa through the Tunisian Consulate but, unfortunately, my request had been denied. However, as the Tunisian consul informed me, it was easy to talk to migrants in the Center’s vicinity and all over the island. Because the Center was over-crowded, migrants of various nationalities moved freely in Lampedusa and could come and go to the Center as they pleased.



Fig 6. Two Migrants Teasing Each Other on the Beach in Lampedusa
Photo taken by Rayed Khedher on 08/04/2014

In Lampedusa, I conducted 14 interviews and made fieldwork observations. My interviews included migrants, asylum seekers, personnel from different NGOs, medical volunteers, staff of the Center, and local journalists. Due to the many migrants landing in Lampedusa, the Italian Ministry of the Interior decided to transform Loran, an ex-NATO, unused, military base, into a temporary reception center. A couple of informants who stayed in Loran complained about the non-hygienic conditions of their detention as well as the over-crowded conditions and their ill-treatment by the on-site *carabinieri* (Italian police) (Interview 07/2014).

ii. Preparation for Fieldwork

Despite my middle-class background and education, I share some socio-cultural experiences with many study participants because I was born and raised in a neighborhood only ten minutes away from Hay Ettadhamen. In addition, thanks to my previous M.A. research and volunteer work for Environment

and Development Action in the Third World (Enda-Inter Arabe), I had become very well acquainted with the township and nurtured a number of friendships, acquaintances, and connections throughout its various districts.

Being fully aware of how long the recruitment of potential participants might take, I started to contact my Tunisian friends in Hay Ettadhamen during the summer of 2012, informing them about my research and asking them to spread the information to their friends. I did some follow-up phone calls from the U.S. to keep in contact, to learn the recent happenings in the neighborhood, to find out about the latest Tunisian jokes, and to discuss my research and the phenomenon of irregular migration as whole. I received regular feedback on what was going on in the township, e.g., how many were leaving, how many were being deported, who these people were, and what were the reactions of the government, the media, and society.

I arrived in Hay Ettadhamen in the spring of 2013, and it was very easy to blend into the social scene and to get swift access to the study population. As well, the study participants were able to relate quickly to me as someone whom they could trust. Upon my arrival in Hay Ettadhamen in June 2013, I started a preliminary phase of comprehensive archival research about its community. I collected articles that appeared in important national Tunisian newspapers, including those, new to me that had emerged after the 2011 uprising, such as *Al Hiwar*, *Al Dhamir*, and *Attanouir*. I also met with close friends who had helped me during my M.A. research, and with whom I remained in touch. Publicity about my study was done by word of mouth via a network of friends and also by the staff of ENDA-Inter Arabe, some of whom I had worked with in 1996. Through informal conversations, I explained that I was a Ph.D. student and that my research was purely academic. I told them that they could ask me anything and that I would be happy to provide them with information and clarifications.

In Sicily, the situation was different because I did not have as many networks of friends, except for those whom I had learned about from my Tunisian informants in Hay Ettadhamen and whom I would meet for the first time. My first site and overall base in Italy was Palermo, and I arrived there on April 03, 2014. One day later, I met with Monji and Housine (two pseudonyms), two Tunisian migrants whose contact numbers I had gotten from a Tunisian informant in Hay Ettadhamen. Monji and Housine already knew about my research and were very friendly to me, explaining “*il Sistema*” (the system) and answering questions about Palermo, what to do, and what not to do. I met with them almost daily in the Borgo Vecchio area where I lived, sharing a coffee, a few beers, or a simple lunch at the local bar. Our meetings were easy and convenient because the two of them shared a small, dilapidated studio in Al Borgo, a five-minute walk from my apartment. They both had cell phones, like the majority of the study population, and were always available and excited to meet with me. I spent the first month of my arrival in Palermo hanging out with Housine and Monji and other Tunisians whom I met through them. I also started to go out alone in order to immerse myself in the local culture, to meet other people relevant to my research, and to obtain the migration articles that appeared daily in local newspapers such as *Giornale di Sicilia*, *Qui Palermo*, *Il Corriere della Sera*, and *La Stampa*. I bought myself a bicycle, which I used to discover the town’s street life and to identify and select other sites where Tunisian migrants would be hanging out, such as La Kalsa, Ballaro, Albergheria, Il Capo, and Castellammare.

iii. Recruitment of Participants

As I have mentioned, I recruited 60, male, Tunisian migrants between the ages of 20 and 35 for participation in this study, either for long-term, participant observations, open-ended interviews, or a combination of both. To recruit volunteers for the interview process, I relied largely on a snowball sampling technique (Le Compte and Schensul 1999:55) without applying any pressure on individuals to join the study. I informed my network of friends in Hay Ettadhamen and key informants in Palermo,

Agrigento, Sciacca, Lampedusa, and Trapani about the goal of my research and asked them to share it with their own networks of friends, family, and acquaintances. The snowball sampling procedure proved less awkward than distributing papers or handouts. However, to speed up the recruitment process and give myself more credibility, I posted flyers at Enda-Inter Arabe in Hay Ettadhamen; however, I was not allowed to post flyers at charitable organizations in Palermo. To compensate for this restriction, I used word-of-mouth and relied on the cooperation and trust of a few informants and NGO volunteers who were very enthusiastic about helping me out. Merriam (1998) describes the researcher's use of theoretical sampling as beginning with "an initial sample chosen for its obvious relevance to the research problem" in which the data will guide the investigator to "the next person to be interviewed, and so on" (p. 63).

At the beginning of each phase of the study whether in Hay Ettadhamen, Palermo, Lampedusa, Agrigento, Trapani or Sciacca, only the participants who agreed to be part of the study were given a flyer in Arabic that explained, in detail, the aims and purpose of the research. I also asked them to let me know if they have any questions related to their participation. For transparency, trust, ethical purposes, and as regulated by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), consent forms in Arabic were distributed to be read, filled out, and signed.

vi. Data-Gathering Strategies

Ethnography is a "family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents" (Willis and Trondman 2000:1). Due to the nature of this project, I used a mixture of qualitative ethnographic methods, i.e., archival research, participant observation, life histories, and open-ended interviews. These methods were employed at the community, social, and individual levels, as well as with groups of youth who were divided based on their socio-demographic characteristics across the three main field sites. This mixture of data-gathering techniques enabled me to see the differences or similarities between various categories of youth in terms of their experiences of abuse and their strategies to reverse inhumane and

oppressive migration policies and treatment. Using this mixed ethnographic design also helped to ensure an enhanced crosschecking of the collected data. Finally, the theoretical framework of this study (see Chapter 4) acted as a guiding principle with regards to the macro-level process of observation, data collection, interpretations, management, and analysis.

v. Archival Research

Since the 2011 uprising, I have been collecting articles written about Tunisian migrants fleeing to Italy and gathering press releases from local newspapers in Tunisia and Italy, many of which came from the prominent Italian newspaper, *Corriere della Sera*. Throughout my research, the press releases provided me with a continually updated framework of the irregular migration phenomenon. I also conducted other major archival research when I was in Tunisia and Sicily. In Hay Ettadhamen, I consulted ENDA's publications, annual reports, and other literature to gain a broad overview of the township as well as pre- and post-uprising, demographic, statistical data that helped clarify my perceptions about it. Enda-Inter Arabe and other local youth associations' annual reports and publications provided me with additional material that was particularly useful in understanding the post-uprising youth dynamics in the township and their connection to the issue of irregular migration. The collected data provided important information on Hay Ettadhamen: the challenges it faced after the 2011 uprising and the massive movement of its youth to Lampedusa. The archival material showed possible directions that my research might take by refining the initial framework of my ethnography. This preliminary phase, also confirmed that very little academic research was being conducted on the issue of irregular migration from Tunisia to Italy during or after the uprising.

In addition to consulting Sicilian newspapers and magazines, I also browsed websites from which I gathered pertinent articles and current facts about the irregular migration phenomenon on the island. In addition, I was able to examine popular TV programs, songs (*Ray*, *Rap* and *Mizwed*), documentaries, blog

postings, and social media spaces about the Tunisians' irregular migration. This archival material gave me a general idea about Tunisian irregular migrants, such as the way they think, their group domains of action, social networks, and places of interaction. Moreover, during the last couple of years, the migrant situation in Lampedusa was the focus of many international news reports, documentaries, and feature film productions. This plethora of archival material provided a thorough and more contextualized idea of the overall phenomenon that I was studying.

Other archival documents included NGO reports, online publications, and documents posted by the Italian Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of the Interior, in particular, its Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration and Department of Public Security. These documents provided data such as those related to the current EU regulations on immigration, the Italian laws on irregular migration, and Italian border control policies. Moreover, I carefully read bilateral agreements and official documents on the management of migration in Italy and the EU that provided an understanding of the regulations and the practical measures implemented in border controls, before and after 2011. A thorough review of the research project, "Clandestino - Undocumented Migration: Counting the Uncountable," which was implemented between 2007 and 2009 and funded by the European Commission, provided me with data and detailed estimates on the irregular migration trends in Italy and across Europe as a whole. Unfortunately, there is no recent report with the wealth of data that "Clandestino" offered.

In all, archival research continued throughout the study until the midpoint of my fieldwork, and it was extremely helpful in guiding and informing my larger theoretical and methodological framework.

vi. Participant Observation

The use of participant observation took place throughout the study, sometimes overlapping with the semi-structured interviews, and sometimes occurring simultaneously. The aim of observation was to

provide a more comprehensive picture of migrants' experiences in the various field sites. I made sure to ask the study participants about things I had observed during site visits, such as my visit to Caritas in Palermo, where I noticed the different treatment of Tunisians as compared to other migrants. Depending on the situation, I employed both overt and covert techniques of observation, generally trying to be as discrete as possible. One important locale for observation was the public square in Al Borgo where those migrants, not constrained by factors such as money, spent several hours a day, drinking, playing cards, exchanging information, and connecting with the other migrants and the residents of the district. I also attended many events such as soccer matches, political rallies, and even birthdays, trying to act spontaneously as a friend rather than a researcher. I visited some of the participants' homes and workplaces, if they were employed, frequented bars, charitable organizations, game rooms, barber shops, markets, Palermo's small mosque, youth centers, stadiums, public gardens, the beach, and the port. Additionally, during the process of field observations, I was able to engage in casual conversations with NGO personnel and journalists, which significantly deepened my understanding of the issues at stake. Participant observation alone would not have allowed me to "learn the answers to questions I would not have had the sense to ask if I had been getting my information solely on an interview basis" (Whyte 1982).

I tried to share as intimately as possible the life, personal stories, testimonies, fears, concerns, and interests of young people in their different settings across the three main research sites. As Guba and Lincoln (1981) aptly state when discussing the crucial practice of observation in ethnographic qualitative research,

[T]he inquirer's ability to grasp motives, beliefs, concerns, interests, unconscious behaviors and the like...allows the inquirer to see the world as his subjects see it, to live their time frames, to capture the phenomenon in and on its own terms, and to grasp the culture in its natural, ongoing environment (p. 193).

The purpose of such participation is to become intimately connected to the study participants' subjectivities and to develop an insider's view of what is happening from the participants' own perspectives and on their own terms. Clifford (1986) writes that "the 'method' of participant-observation...enact[s] a delicate balance of subjectivity and objectivity" (p.13). Later in this chapter, I will address my position as a participant researcher, acting as both an insider and outsider, in order to discuss the subjective issues in this project.

The power of participant observation is that it can help validate the collected data by revealing the potential inconsistencies between the informants' responses during interviews and what they actually do when they socially interact among themselves. While observing and participating, I paid particular attention to discourses around what it means to be an irregular migrant from Tunisia, what determines his vulnerability, and whether he is part of any local or transnational socio-cultural/political alliance or network. Moreover, in order to document and record the different aspects of the participants' daily routine, I used different strategies. First, I looked for extended opportunities to gain a better understanding of my participants' lives by attending their daily activities, such as going to the game rooms, bars, and charitable organizations, and accompanying them when they were looking for jobs. In certain situations, however, I discretely recorded field notes both while "hanging out" with the migrants and immediately after visiting a location, as my role was sometimes limited solely to observation. I kept a separate notebook for each field site and wrote down information, such as the socio-demographics and economic characteristics of people, the description and layout of the physical space and the context, the events that occurred, conversations amongst migrants and their friends, behavior, body language, and reflections on my own conversations with migrants, NGO personnel, journalists, and local residents.

While conducting my ethnography, I was overwhelmed; every migrant I encountered seemed to have a powerful story to tell with extraordinary insights. This resulted in a huge amount of information

that provided an extremely rich narrative and data set for my research. Also, I was surprised to be spontaneously approached by many migrants, especially by deportees in Hay Ettadhamen, who had heard about my study via word-of-mouth, popularly known as “*telephone-Arabe*,” and who persistently asked to be part of my research. It turned out later that many were reaching out to me because they thought I could potentially be a valuable contact who would help them, via connections or money, secure a trip back to Lampedusa.

vii. Open-ended Interviews

Open-ended interviews gave me access to aspects of the migrants’ culture that I was unable to observe via participant observation, helping me gather detailed accounts, opinions, and feelings directly from the respondent (Ervin, 2000). Weiss (1995) advocates for the use of qualitative interviews since they can provide “the fullest, most detailed description possible” in order to understand a phenomenon that “no single person [can] observe in its totality” (p. 9).

Before conducting the interviews, I established initial contact by phone through the applications WhatsApp and Viber, setting up a date, time, and location. I used most questions listed in the interview guide, but I altered and/or removed some questions, depending on the situation and whether or not the informant was comfortable with certain questions, e.g., those dealing with the boat journey. While interviewing, however, the question guide was primarily used as an agenda because I wanted to build an atmosphere in which an informal conversation could occur, rather than have a question-answer session. Throughout the various phases of this study, I kept the interview schedule and location flexible to accommodate each participant’s preferences and availabilities.

In the three main field sites, I conducted 60 open-ended interviews: 18 in Hay Ettadhamen; 22 in Palermo; 12 in Trapani; 8 in Agrigento; 6 in Sciacca; and 14 in Lampedusa. All the interviews were conducted at venues specified by the study participants, including their workplaces, their homes, my

home, car/road trips, and public spaces, such as beaches, parks, and cafés/bars. I also conducted a few interviews with mothers and other family members of migrants when I was travelling by boat between Palermo and Tunis. Most interviews were conducted in *darija*, the Tunisian Arabic dialect, with Tunisian migrants, in Italian with Italian participants, and in English with NGO personnel, international activists, and volunteers. These interviews lasted between 60 to 90 minutes for the study population, while taking less time, 15 to 30 minutes, for the rest of the participants. I recorded the interviews, except for those few informants who did not want to be recorded, and took notes, making various observations and reflections during the interview sessions. Later, I translated and transcribed both the notes and interviews into English.

In order to ensure the quality of the data collected, I used my iPad to record most of the interviews in an MP3 format. Later, I transferred these recordings to my computer and then to an external hard drive to avoid any incident or data loss. I also created an interview timetable, in which I included some brief socio-demographic information about the interviewee, the interview time and place. For instance, in Hay Ettadhamen, I conducted face-to-face, unstructured interviews with 18 participants, all of whom were deported migrants. In order to elicit self-narratives of their own experiences, I engaged them in thematic, in-depth conversations that focused mainly on their experiences in Italy and Hay Ettadhamen. Specifically, my conversations focused on topics such as their experiences with “illegality,” Islamophobic attitudes, abuse and oppression, life in the detention centers, and social interactions on the island. I then asked participants to discuss their lives and personal experiences as deported individuals in the aftermath of the 2011 uprising. I suggested that they further reflect upon their experiences by making the connection between their past situation in Italy and their current one in Hay Ettadhamen.

In order to avoid causing emotional distress, I approached sensitive and personal issues carefully and compassionately to ensure that study participants did not feel pressured to reveal anything that made

them uncomfortable. I also informed them, from the beginning that they could withdraw from the interview at any time. Due to the fact that some interview questions raised issues that were sensitive, intimate, and emotionally draining, I gave the participants frequent breaks or, at times, rescheduled the interview as a whole. Ervin points out that “this would allow the respondents time to become comfortable with the interviewing process” (Ervin 2000). I maintained maximum neutrality toward the specific content of certain responses because I did not want to be seen making judgments. I was also careful not to annoy the respondents or cause them any psychological harm. After the interview sessions, I would generally go back home to write down the content of the interview, additional observations, and thoughts about the meeting. While writing my notes, questions and ideas would eventually emerge that would require additional meetings with the research participants to bring more clarification to some of the issues they had raised earlier. Interviews in public contexts, such as bars and restaurants, were not recorded; rather, I recalled and wrote down the context of the event and its data in as much detail as I could in my field notes when I was home.

viii. Data Management Strategies

After the completion of each phase of fieldwork, data gathered from participant observation was typed and then organized, using colored fonts, into various themes. The recorded interviews were translated and transcribed during the summers of 2013 and 2014 and the fall of 2014 and 2015. After the transcription of all the interviews, I reviewed the material and organized it into retrievable sessions by assigning numbers identified by dates, themes, sub-themes, categories, as well as places and times of the interviews. To ensure a high level of confidentiality, real names were substituted by pseudonyms. In my thematic analysis of each interview transcription, as well as during the analysis of my field notes, I remained continuously reflexive with my findings, trying to compare my notes with what the study participants had to say.

For my data analysis, I began to establish a list of themes, such as “examples of vulnerabilities,” “social marginalization,” “neighborly networks,” “acts of resistance,” “Islamophobia,” “distress,” “exploitation,” “criminalization,” and “bodily inflicted harm.” These were then divided into categories and codes. For example, the theme of “distress” was delineated into four sub-themes: 1) the boat journey, 2) the detention center, 3) the overall migration experience in Italy, and 4) the deportation. I was able to analyze all moments when the study participants discussed their feelings of distress according to those four different, but inter-related, experiences. A careful thematic analysis was then conducted to pull out units of data that could be given a particular code, which could then be extracted and examined in depth to answer the research questions. From this final coding, my aim was to pull out the contexts, such as which human rights violations took place, and to understand the various political, economic, and legislative conditions that were responsible for creating those situations of extreme vulnerabilities and abuse.

ix. Data Analysis Techniques

The data I collected during my extended fieldwork were rich and diverse, and I realized that I had more than I could handle for the analysis and then the writing of this dissertation. My strategy to avoid being overwhelmed was to continuously check the reliability and validity of my analyses to see if the interpretations I had made from the field notes reflected the reality of the participants’ accounts and perspectives. I also carefully scrutinized the data gathered from archival research, participant observation, and in-depth interviews to gain a greater perspective on the main themes and to check whether the research questions had been answered. Participant observation notes were triangulated with the interviews to reach a maximum validity of the emerging themes and to understand the appropriate patterns. The following steps were necessary for the analysis of the collected data:

- Familiarization with the emerging data through an in-depth examination;

- Transcription of the taped material, including gestures and non-verbal cues;
- Organization and indexing of data;
- Coding of categories; and
- Detection of specific themes.

The migrants told me narratives that helped them reconstruct their lives through the recollection of the past, present and hopes for the future. These memories are, as Hopkins says “central to the development of social and personal identity” (Hopkins 1994:127). The data, provided by the narratives, is distinctive and cannot be obtained from simple questionnaires or other interviewing techniques. Because the main goal of mapping out the life histories of the irregular migrants is to identify their vulnerabilities and resistance strategies, grounded theory was used to illuminate the actions and involvement of migrants in local and transnational activities. Narrative accounts and life histories have been used by a number of social scientists (Abu-Lughod 1991; Gmelch 1992; Hopkins 1994; Ochs and Capps 1996), who have employed them as conceptual tools through which they analyze their research data. This micro-approach was used by other scholars such as Abu-Lughod (1991), who points out that the macro-processes are often manifested locally and are “produced in the actions of individuals living their particular lives, inscribed in their bodies and their words” (Abu-Lughod 1991:150). Ochs and Capps (1996) argue that narratives create an opportunity to construct a lineal sequence between “past, present and imagined worlds” (Ochs and Capps 1996). Also, they add that

the inseparability of narrative and self-grounded [noun missing here?] in the phenomenological assumption that entities are given meaning through being experienced and the notion that narrative is an essential resource in the struggle to bring experiences to conscious awareness. Narratives are versions of reality. They are embodiments of one or more points of view rather than objective accounts” (Ochs and Capps 1996:21-22).

Drawing on Polkinghorne (1991), researchers can consider narratives as stories about the self. They are “the basis of personal identity and self-understanding and they provide answers to the question, Who am I?” (Polkinghorne 1991:136).

For this dissertation, narrative functioned as a conceptual tool that I employed to analyze the research data and to answer the hypothesis questions. I quote most participants directly in order to both identify the issues affecting their lives and to voice their concerns with their own accounts. I chose to quote them because they contain rich data that tell us how the population of this study incorporates various cultural meanings when they engage in the construction and presentation of their “selves.” The emotional mood of these narratives, as reflected in this dissertation, gives the migration issue its subjective and human aspects and helps readers to examine them from the insiders’ standpoints. Gmelch (1992) argues that using this genre makes us “get beneath the abstractions of migration theory.” He further admits that migration is hard to observe; therefore, narratives help us “get sense of the degree to which migrants are free actors shaping their own destinies” (Gmelch 1992:311-324). The stories these potential migrants tell about themselves, my theoretical analysis, and the story I tell are transformations of each other; they are, as Foucault argues, “retellings of a sequence of events derived from the discursive practice of our historical era” (Foucault 1973).

III. Ethics and Confidentiality

Ervin states, “What is most important in maintaining confidentiality is the protection of individuals and potentially vulnerable subgroups” (Ervin, 2000). From the beginning of this research, all participants were assured that their involvement in the study was anonymous and were asked to sign a form attesting that they understood the subject of the study and that their participation was voluntary. Informed consent “entails making the subject fully aware of the purpose of the study, its possible dangers and the credentials of the researcher” (Bailey, 1994). Throughout the research, I was careful to ask questions and

not to cause any harm to participants by ensuring that the interview data would be handled with confidentiality and that the recorded material would only be accessible to me. I explained to each participant that I would protect his identity, which was a relief to them and made them more comfortable when sharing their life histories, experiences, emotions, and thoughts. Being Tunisian myself and a native speaker of the Tunisian dialect, I did not have communication or etiquette problems while doing fieldwork in Hay Ettadhamen or Sicily. My fluency in Italian and English has also helped me gain credibility and easy access to a variety of Italians, such as local and international NGO personnel, journalists, filmmakers, and local inhabitants.

IV. Issues of Positionality: Personal Reflections

Despite the challenges of conducting multi-sited fieldwork, I tried to provide an ethical, detailed, holistic picture of the lives of the migrants under study on their grounds and on their own terms. In this section, I share my reflections on the challenges I faced in the process of doing fieldwork, particularly the issues of reflexivity and positionality, as well as the tensions, and conflicts that they represent, explicitly and implicitly. In most ethnographic research, reflexivity is a useful strategy that can help the ethnographer address the social, cultural, political, and personal aspects of their positionality in relation to the participants and contexts under study (Ellis & Bochner, 1996; Marcus, 1998; Okely, 1996). Despite the mutual trust and intimate relationship, I developed with most of the study participants, there were many times throughout the fieldwork where I felt I was being positioned as an “outsider.” That I live in the U.S. and am identified as a scholar/researcher, created distance, and I was sometimes referred to as “different” or “too smart.” As Imed, a 32-year-old migrant said,

You are an anthropologist from the U.S., and that is why you will never understand us or relate to what we are going through. We are vulnerable migrants with no rights. You will never understand our difficult lives or the amount of *dommar* (ordeal) and *mizirya* (misery) that we encounter on a daily basis (Interview 06/2014).

As my research evolved, comments like this amplified my self-awareness and sensitivity about being an educated and privileged Tunisian man; in turn, this affected the way I sometimes positioned myself and behaved at certain episodes of the study. For example, I decided to share with the study participants my own personal experiences of cultural displacement, as well as my concerns and uncertainties as a Tunisian or “foreigner” in Italy. I told them how hard it was for me to obtain my visa for Italy and that I had been subject to a racial profiling experience by the Italian police when I landed in Palermo. In addition, I shared incidents of racial profiling that I encountered in Los Angeles simply as a result of being a Muslim and Arab man. Sharing my similarities in terms of cultural/religious heritage and personal migration experiences alleviated the distance that I had been experiencing, especially at the beginning of my fieldwork. Being a Tunisian studying abroad was a valuable position that allowed me to make close connections with my study participants over time and allowed them to readily share their migration stories. As Geertz (1995:94) eloquently points out, “Field research in such times, in such places, is not a matter of working free from the cultural baggage you brought with you so as to enter, without shape and without attachment, into a foreign mode of life. It is a matter of living out your existence in two stories at once.”

Hence, I became much closer to some informants, turning into a friend who was accepted and trusted. It was touching when my key informants grew concerned about my safety, especially when I would be riding my bike or walking home alone late at night in Palermo. They would insist that I call or text them as soon as I made it home. Sometimes, they would accompany me until I reached the main gate of my apartment building to ensure I did not get mugged or harmed, especially after hanging out late at night in shady neighborhoods, such as La Kalsa or the Vucheria. During my stay in Palermo, I invited a couple of informants, with whom I had closely bonded, for a small Ramadan Tunisian *iftar* (post-sunset

evening meal) as a way to show appreciation and gratitude, to reinforce their trust in me, and to ensure that the fieldwork would proceed smoothly. This invitation was reciprocated when Mondher invited Housine, Monji, and me and his Palermitan girlfriend to their tiny apartment near Al Borgo for another *iftar*, during which we shared our life stories, told jokes, and played cards (Field notes 07/2014).

Throughout my research, I was extremely aware of my role as an ethnographer and the importance of doing ethical research, in which the study population is fully protected and respected. I maintained a high degree of reflexivity and was very careful not to engage in any delicate political or personal issues, i.e., trying to avoid things that could hinder my relationship with the informants and that could lead to any potential conflict. As Foley (2002) writes “to make ethnography at least quasi-objective, one has to become much more reflexive about all ethnographic practices—from field relations and interpretative practices to producing texts” (p. 473). Due to a number of sensitive issues encountered during fieldwork, such as criminal activities, physical abuse, and male prostitution, I also did my best to preserve the anonymity of my participants by limiting the amount of identifying information and only providing basic, socio-demographic characteristics. At times, I had to change other forms of identifying information, such as occupation or hometown in Tunisia, which I felt might expose the identity of a study participant.

V. Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided a meticulous overview of the data collection methodology used to answer the research questions of this study and to gain a deeper understanding of the daily life experiences of the study population. I explained my choice of a qualitative, multi-sited design, arguing that it was the most appropriate way to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and the participants’ social worlds. To give a clear context and familiarize the readers with my six locations, I provided a “thick” description of Hay Ettadhamen, Sicily, Palermo, Agrigento, Siacca, Trapani, and Lampedusa. After this rich description, I laid down the multiple techniques that I used to facilitate my immersion in these different sites and the

way I built rapport, recruited the study participants, and got access to their lives. I gathered my data using three qualitative research techniques: 1) archival research, 2) open-ended interviews, and 3) participant observation. I then discussed my data analysis and management techniques. Finally, I elaborated on the importance of conducting ethical research and reviewed the procedures I followed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the study participants.

The chapter ended with a discussion of the issues of positionality and the challenges and opportunities of being an “insider” doing research in a foreign country. Throughout my analysis, I reflected on my own cultural identity and my position as a researcher from a well-known U.S. university, as an “insider” conducting research on my own ethnic group, i.e., the Tunisian migrant population. Due to the asymmetrical power relations between my study population, and me as a researcher, it was important to remain mindful of the ethics of conducting fieldwork and research with marginalized groups. Given the sensitivities of the issue that I am studying and the vulnerability of my study population, several key issues had to be addressed and taken into consideration, i.e., my role and positionality as the main researcher and the ways in which I can responsibly, ethically, and academically represent my participants’ views with the least distortion possible.

CHAPTER FOUR

REVIEW OF THE MIGRATION LITERATURE

I. Introduction

According to Jordan and Duvell irregular migration is the “crossing of borders without proper authority, or violating conditions for entering another country” (2002: 15). This type of migration is not new, as irregular migrants have always contributed to filling the gap in the economy of core countries whose nationals are often reluctant to take certain jobs in fields such as agriculture, domestic services, and industry (Terray et al. 2000). Irregular migration is so common today that it is almost impossible to discuss current migration without referring to the phenomenon, which dominates the headlines and is used in public debates, mainstream media, and academia. Although its context, processes, and theoretical challenges are not deeply interrogated in academic research, irregular migration still grounds diverse arguments in the field of anthropology and the larger social science arena. However, the existing scholarship does not constitute a distinct stream from the broad migration literature that covers human mobility, its diversity, and complexity across the globe.

Most of the migration literature demonstrates that nation-states, which claim to protect and provide for their citizens and to have control over their national borders are, in fact, becoming less and less capable of supporting this claim. The 2011 Tunisian popular uprising has demonstrated the porosity of national borders and the weakness of the nation-state concept. This border permeability is further substantiated by the intense economic, socio-cultural, and transnational political exchanges (“legal” and “illegal”) taking place across many national borders. Those transnational exchanges continue to problematize binaries that have long characterized social analysis concerning issues such as the “nation state,” “national identity,” and “sovereignty.” There is no doubt that the so-called “Arab Spring” and the

flow of human mobility that it has engendered has further dramatically and qualitatively metamorphosed and complicated the character of these transnational movements. As such, the long upheld image of the “uprooted” migrant, which characterized earlier migration research, has vanished in light of the multiple, varied, regular, and irregular transnational border movements taking place in today’s world. A plethora of phenomena, usually subsumed under the label “transnationalism,” are currently being studied and are often regarded as having transformed the way we study borders and trans-border flows of individuals and migrant communities.

New transnational research thus demonstrates how ethnographic studies can capture the dichotomy of local-global by rethinking human mobility with respect to its myriad forms, volume, and pace. This has, in turn, demonstrated that local happenings are inevitably shaped by events taking place thousands of miles away and vice versa. Through the increased global mobility of people and labor, a number of scholars started to reframe the question of “borders” as both confining locations and shifting political spaces that defy any clear-cut definition, thereby removing them from their seeming geographic and sovereign primacy.

In this chapter, I provide a detailed, four-part discussion of migration by 1) reviewing the migration key literature and development of transnational research, outlining its paradoxical nature and discussing its relevance to anthropology and other social sciences; 2) examining the ways in which anthropology, with its conceptual tools, has shaped studies of migration empirically and normatively; 3) discussing multi-sited research design and assessing its utility in addressing postmodern constructs such as “mobility” and the “spatial turn”; and 4) analyzing the phenomenon of irregular migration as a product of the transnational condition. I particularly examine irregular migration through the lens of social network theory and demonstrate through theoretical and ethnographic evidence that social networks play a crucial role in the lives of irregular migrants such as the Tunisian migrants of this study, by creating a form of

social capital¹³ operating across borders and acting like a dynamic engine that fuels “chain migration,” thereby stimulating and accelerating the process of irregular migration.

II. Key Migration Theories: Conceptual Issues

In recent decades, a number of anthropologists (Anderson 1991, 2007; Appadurai 1991; Brettell 2000; Foner et al 2000; Massey et al. 1998; Robinson 2004; Urry 2003) have examined the factors that engender transnational migration by looking at global capitalism as the main catalyst facilitating human mobility. Many have used ethnographic research to capture the “permeability” of national boundaries and the possibilities of re-forming networks of political organizing among different migrant populations (Schiller and Blanc 1993). They argue that the boundaries between nation-states are blurred lines and claim that nations are not natural or unchanging communities; rather, nations are entities that are imagined and negotiated (Anderson 1991; Appadurai 1991; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1994; Gilroy 1993). Consequently, new theories of identity, ethnicity, economics, and politics have compelled a number of scholars to re-consider some of the prevalent migration classical theories such as the “push-pull” theory that was traditionally used by social scientists to explain human mobility such as irregular movements (Brettell 2000).

The push-pull theory centers on macro-level factors, i.e., factors in the migration-producing countries, such as poverty and unemployment, that push people out while, in the receiving countries, attractive features, such as consumption patterns, higher living standards, and job opportunities, pull them in. According to push-pull theory, any migratory movement is a result of push forces in sending countries and pull forces in receiving ones. This theory, despite still being relevant, accounts neither for the intervening impediments to migration nor the personal factors involved in the migration decision and the

¹³ This paper uses Bourdieu’s definition of social capital: “The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu, 1985:248).

overall mobility process. Indeed, in classical migration theories such as the push-pull theory (Lee 1966), concepts, e.g., core-periphery (Wallerstein 1979), are too simplistic because they fail to explain the diversity and intricacy of people's movements across the globe and contribute relatively little to the understanding of the complexity of the irregular migration phenomenon (Anderson 1991; Appadurai 1991; Gilroy 1993). Further, those theories were developed in the 1960s and 1970s, two decades when human mobility and border crossings were relatively simple compared to current complex migration patterns.

Other social scientists advance the idea that transnational migration is a natural result of globalization and transnational capitalism (Anderson 1991; Appadurai 1991; Brettell 2000; Gilroy 1993; Robinson 2004; Urry 2003). The global market has generated an exceptional increase in human mobility as millions of migration candidates are lured by a global demand for labor. As such, globalization studies place an emphasis on migration as a phenomenon resulting from the large-scale transformations of non-industrial societies, as well as the uneven geographical distribution of global capital and labor (Brettell 2000:102). Anthropological research has the capacity to scrutinize these globalization forces and examine their relationships by focusing on actual migrants and studying their different experiences from emic and holistic perspectives. Many anthropologists have studied these relationships and attempted to explain the process through which they operate (Anderson 1991; Appadurai 1991; Brettell 2000; Gilroy 1993). According to Brettell,

Typologies formulated by some anthropologists have directed research to the diverse nature of the process and to the fundamental relationship between sending and receiving societies, whether conceived in the macro terms of a global economy or in the micro terms of social networks and emotional relationships (Brettell 2000:102).

These typologies can be helpful in decrypting the broader context in which people's movements take place, including irregular border crossings. Yet today, all this happens in a context of increasing instability at the political, economic, social, and cultural levels. The relationships among the various

countries of the Mediterranean are now based on several paradoxical interests where both the economy and national security are top priorities. Ironically, while an increasing number of people have the desire and means to travel more than ever before for purposes of migration or routine tourist travel, enhanced border controls are making it ever more difficult for them to do so (Ouchou 1996). The phenomenon of irregular migration is tightly linked to the expansive nature of the global market with its commodities, ideologies, technology, and culture. This happens, in part, because globalization creates infrastructures of transportation, communication, and social networks that make the rich global North “virtually” accessible and within deceptive reach to the rest of the impoverished global South.

Structural Marxists like Immanuel Wallerstein (1979) have examined migration from the perspective of world system theory, arguing that the relationship between core and periphery nations provides the most viable explanation of today’s various migratory movements. In the same vein, Brettell (2000) argues that “the unit of analysis according to the political economy of world system is not the individual migrant, but rather the global market and the way that national and international economic and political policies, and particularly, capitalist development, have disrupted, displaced, or even attracted local populations, thereby generating particular migration streams” (Brettell 2000:104). Within this new international division of labor, populations in nations of the periphery, whose economic conditions are deteriorating because of globalization, have an added incentive to leave their countries and move to the core for better economic opportunities (Froebel et al. 1980). The global market is generating a separate division of labor by stimulating labor mobility such that core countries can exploit the advantages of lower labor costs and open the doors for people in the periphery to become potential migrants (Terray et al. 2000).

Irregular migration then cannot be discussed outside the context of the global labor market because its existence is highly dependent on the availability of a very cheap, disposable, and often

irregular workforce. Irregular migrant workers have become vital for many Western economies that rely on cheap and flexible labor. It is this cheap “illegal” labor that supplies European and American consumerism with fruits, vegetables, and clothes at incredibly low prices (Terray et al. 2000). The image of states as simply reactive, responding to the growth of irregular transnational flows, is misleading because “it understates the degree to which states actually structure, condition, produce, and enable clandestine border crossings” (De Genova 2002:64). Terray et al. (2000) describe the importance of cheap labor to Western economies, arguing that western economies based on irregular migrants’ labor represent a form of *delocalisation sur place*, a French colloquialism which symbolically means “delocalization on the spot” (Terray et al. 2000: 82). This implies that these factories and various industries, not outsourced to countries of the global South where labor costs are low, simply exploit the cheap labor available by way of irregular migration. As these authors aptly put it,

What do the neo-liberals want? They want a workforce which is as flexible and docile as possible and which is deprived of any protection. Undocumented foreigners represent a totally flexible workforce, because you can recruit or dismiss them as you wish, as work orders arrive. The best way to have products at very low prices is to generalize slavery. The fundamental question is whether we accept sectors in which slavery is common practice, or if we are not prepared to accept this (Terray et al. 2000: 82).

III. New Debates on Transnationalism

In the last few years, the concept of transnationalism has been developed and employed by anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, geographers, and many others in the study of migration movements. Ong highlights the significance of migrants’ transnational activities, arguing that the concept of transnationalism is best suited to explain the condition of increasing cultural interconnectedness and other kinds of human mobility across borders. This definition, she contends, should not be an attempt to reify a conception of the world as “composed of sovereign, spatially discontinuous units,” but rather to problematize the very notion that cultures and societies are bound and, indeed, defined by the nation-state (Ong 1997). Glick Schiller (2003: 99) defines transnationals as “those persons who having migrated from

one nation-state to another live their lives across borders, participating simultaneously in social relations that embed them in more than one nation-state.” She also argues that the various activities and identity claims in the political domain are a particular form of transnational migration that is best understood as a form of loyalty and a long-distance nationalism. This could be well evidenced by the various kinds of resistance movements as well as the ties and different relationships that trans-migrants maintain with their homelands through remittances, technology transfer, political activism, and so forth.

Another approach to transnationalism deals with political transnational activism, which argues that the nation-state system has already weakened, leaving space for international governance bodies and global rights regimes to protect individual migrants regardless of their national citizenship (Soysal 1994, Beck 2000). In her studies of the Chinese diaspora in North America, Ong (1996) has demonstrated that liminal sites of transnational practices and discourses can be used for entrepreneurial purposes quite as efficiently as for the purpose of disputing “hegemonic narratives” of race, ethnicity, class, and sovereignty. Further, anthropologists use the concept, “transnationalism,” as an analytical tool to describe the “process by which migrants, through their daily activities, forge and sustain various social, economic, and political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, and through which they create transnational social fields that cross national borders” (Bach, Glick-Schiller, and Szanton-Blanc 1994: 6). This kind of transnational research, largely ethnographic and multi-sited in nature, has generally been carried out by anthropologists and sociologists (Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003; Schiller, Basch and Blanc 1995; Smith and Guarnizo 1998, Ong 1997, Kearney 1995). Much of the existing literature, mostly with regards to Mexican migration, is concerned with transnational communities that span international boundaries through various types of socio-cultural and political activities. Chavez (1991), for instance, writes about how irregular Mexican migrants, in order to subsist in the U.S., vary their adjustment strategies and their social mobilization according to their needs. He

describes these arrangements as a form of resistance towards the exploitation and abuses they encounter, i.e., “weapons of the weak,” (Scott 1985: 29). In their definition of transnational interactions and organizations, Nye et al. state that

in the most general sense one can speak of “global interactions” as movements of information, money, physical objects, people, or other tangible or intangible items across state boundaries. We can distinguish four major types of global interaction: 1) communication, the movement of information, including the transmission of beliefs, ideas, and doctrines; 2) transportation, the movement of physical objects, including war materiel and personal property as well as merchandise; 3) finance, the movement of money and instruments of credit; 4) travel, the movement of persons. It is important to note that many international activities involve all four types of interaction simultaneously (*in* Levitt et al. 2008: 24).

However, while the term transnational migration proposes a more or less perpetual condition of being between two or more locations, the access and the amount of time spent in this state varies dramatically among different categories of people based on their regular/irregular status, access to resources, gender, race, religion, class, and so forth. All the people living a transnational experience are exposed in some shared way, but at different levels, to a set of social norms and cultural values fashioned by circumstances and one, two, or multiple social, economic, and political systems. It is clear that accessibility to transnational flows is often reserved for those social actors who have the economic means, the political space, or the cultural capital to benefit from them. In this context, then, what level of transnationalism exists, if any, among the Tunisian post-uprising irregular migrant community? And does this transnationalism have any positive, transformative impacts on migrants’ level of resistance to the various abuses that they face in Italy?

Levitt and Schiller propose a social-field approach to the study of present day migration by exploring the numerous divisions between the local, national, transnational, and global. In so doing, they engage in differentiating between “*ways of being*” and “*ways of belonging*” (Levitt and Schiller 2008: 286). According to them, approaching migration in this way can help demonstrate that assimilation and persistent transnational links are neither incompatible nor opposites because both can help scholars delve

into issues of citizenship, political identity, and social change as they unfold in transnational arenas (Levitt et al. 2008). Levitt & Schiller (2008:286) state, “migrant networks are viewed as constituting a single social field created by a network of networks,” which could be used as a conceptual tool in social analysis that goes beyond the study of the individual. According to Basch, Schiller, and Blanc (1994), social fields could be defined as sets of manifold, intertwined networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are unevenly exchanged, processed, and transmuted within and across borders. Many Tunisian migrants in this study, as will be demonstrated, do engage in some kinds of transnational activities, but not all are operating within transnational social fields.

Under the above definition, social fields are multiple and diverse resources composed of various interactions of different forms and intensities. This construct of social fields can be used as a conceptual tool to fathom the multi-sited lives of the trans-border migrants. It can also be employed to capture all kinds of local, national, global, and transnational experiences lived concurrently by contemporary migrants in various locations. As such, social fields encapsulating cultural, economic, and political exchanges have the capacity to reinforce the migrant sense of community while, at times, challenging the host society’s national sovereignty and its ability to control its borders. On the other hand, Faist (2000: 189) argues that whether scholars talk of transnational social spaces, transnational social fields, transnationalism, or transnational social formations in international migration systems, they usually refer to sustained ties of persons, networks, and organizations across the borders and across multiple nation states. These ties range from minimally to highly institutionalized forms.

Considering the many challenges that the concept of transnationalism has engendered, a number of migration scholars have attempted to expand the concept to incorporate certain categories of migrants, such as those engaged in sporadic transnational activities. Others (Guarnizo 1998) introduce the concepts of “core” transnationalism to refer to activities that are regular, organized, and sustained through time and

“expanded” transnationalism to designate activities and exchanges of a more sporadic character.

Similarly, Levitt (2001: 199) argues, “the concepts of core and expanded transnationalism must also be extended to include the transnational practices of those who stay behind.”

Treatments of various forms of transnationalism can denote the presence of certain disparities in terms of their access to these networks or “social fields” as well as their ability to maintain these intense transnational flows in the first place. Smith and Guarnizo (1998), for instance, advocate for a delineation of the term by distinguishing the “transnationalism from above” of corporations and states, and the “transnationalism from below” of international migrants. Use of this distinction demonstrates that, in each case, transnational spaces as embedded in particular geopolitical structures determine the circumstances under which transnational communities develop under those multiple, uneven, and complex webs. These webs act like the engine that generates, sustains, and reproduces those transnational networks through the constant, albeit uneven, material, ideological, and symbolic exchanges that take place.

Transnational migration is not uniform and is formed by a heterogeneous, rather than a unitary, group of people, possessing distinct personal and social endowments, i.e., human capital and social capital. Because people are migrating under different circumstances, they exhibit significant, if subtle, regional and socio-cultural differences. Heterogeneity also continues to mark the degree to which migrants can access opportunities in the host society, which in part explains why not all migrants are able to afford the sustenance of active and sometimes lucrative transnational ties. However, this being said, one needs to be careful when it comes to the decontextualized treatment of transnational migrants as “timeless” cultural wholes or neutral categories detached from the often disputed historical and geographical backgrounds of their emergence. Similarly, the easy depiction of transnational subjects as “hybrid” obscures the fact that no matter how much spatial mobility or border-crossing experiences migrants have; it must always be contextualized within those spatial and geopolitical boundaries.

Due to this major shift in the migration phenomenon, “transnational migration” as a new paradigm emerged and proliferated especially quickly during the last two decades. A broad literature with studies of various transnational activities has been on the rise, with a number of them carried out on various migrant communities in the U.S., Europe, and other parts of the world. The bulk of this literature conveyed the sense that transnationalism, in opposition to assimilation, is becoming the “normative pattern” of adaptation and performance for a large number of contemporary migrants. These studies are highly ethnographic in nature and, notably, most of this literature adopts a qualitative approach and is exclusively based on multi-sited research techniques such as those I used for this dissertation.

Transnational *migration* is the process by which migrants forge and sustain simultaneous relations across borders; on the other hand, transnational *community* is used to describe very different units of analysis. Some scholars perceive this community narrowly as a specific locality in which local relationships expand across borders (Goldring 1996; Levitt 2001; Smith 1998; Georges 1992). The local, then, no longer refers to where the migrants come from as much as the current space in which they live and interact, which might span various places in two or more countries (Ossman 2004, 2007). Some researchers perceive this community in a broader way, i.e., as reference to a specific region with which migrants identify in transnational contexts, such as *Mixteca* in Mexico, which has become an important point of reference and identity for a number of transnational migrants in the U.S. (Kearney 1990). Furthermore, some researchers perceive this community in its broadest sense when talking of groups of people originating from the same nation-state and engaging in similar transnational activities, such as Mexican migrant communities in the U.S. (Roberts et al. 1999) and the Tunisian irregular migrant community in Sicily. To a large extent, most of these migration scholars are interested in what Smith and Guarnizo (1998) have labeled “transnationalism from below,” which examines people’s mundane activities and everyday forms of agency within and across nation-state borders. This model enables trans-

migrants across the globe to nurture economic, social, and political activities that span borders and sustain, produce, and reproduce their dual or multiple transnational lives.

Transnational migrants, such as the Tunisian migrant population of this study, are transforming their lives and the lives of others, by creatively engaging in various cultural, socio-economic, and political conversations and activities. Tunisian migrants use transnational networks, communication technologies, and social media to reject their label as “passive victims” by re-enacting their resistance against the Italian state through its hegemonic practices and oppressive migration policies. This being said, they do not all play the same role or are equally involved in transnational activities within and across the Italian borders. Migration policies, i.e., visa rules, border security, police interventions, and asylum policies play a crucial role in shaping both regular and irregular migration movements (Brochmann and Hammar, 1999; Castles, De Haas, and Miller, 2014).

However, in spite of the popularity of the transnational paradigm in the field of social sciences, several critiques have emerged regarding its rigor, efficacy, clarity, and empirical usage. Pries (2007), on the other hand, makes a distinction between various units of analysis and advocates for the importance of clarifying

the specific relation between the (transnational) units of analysis, the (local, national, regional or global) units of reference and the (micro, meso or macro) units of research. These components characterize the transnational perspective and differentiate it from a global or simply comparative point of view (Pries 2007: 3).

Moreover, one of the main debates prevailing in the field of transnational migration studies, revolves around the question of the intergenerational continuity of the transnational experiences of those currently living transnational lives and creating transnational networks of social capital. These debates center on whether households or sending communities are appropriate units of analysis for gauging the levels of social reproduction of trans-local ties (Guarnizo and Smith 1998: 16-17; Levitt and Waters 2002).

According to a number of scholars, the transnational framework can be used as a positive tool for the maximization of migrants' vulnerable human and social capital. Using the increased global mobilization of people and labor, these scholars reframe the question of "borders" as both confining locations as well as shifting political spaces that defy any clear-cut definition that removes them from their seemingly geographical and sovereign primacy.

Friedman (1995) argues that the "world investigated by anthropologists is a world already transformed structurally by its integration into the global system" (Friedman 1995:74). Nations are structurally transformed by their incorporation into global markets, with people being forced to leave their traditional livelihoods and to suddenly become international migrants (de Has 2001; Massey et al. 1998). As such, the study of people's movements across national boundaries has very recently become one of the main research areas for many anthropologists, especially those working with urban and transnational communities. Anthropology scholars are now disengaging with the prevailing, essentializing binaries such as the push-pull and core-periphery theories that have shaped studies of migration empirically and normatively.

I argue that the former concerns of anthropology, pigeonholed by dichotomies such as the global-local, the urban-rural, the male-female, the domestic-public, the regular-irregular, and so forth are no longer valid in explaining the contemporary human movements of the postmodern world. For anthropology to capture current transnational experiences, it has to adopt an analytical shift from old master narratives that support binary frameworks to an accommodation with the new challenges facing our mobile world. A strategic methodology would take account of geopolitical configurations, the plurality of personal identities, and diverse migrants' social roles across nation-state borders.

The recent theoretical perspectives in the anthropology of migration have started to reconsider some of the traditional methodological frameworks of the discipline, such as "doing ethnography."

Anthropologists have argued that this method is no longer appropriate or feasible with regards to research on transnational processes because the field must now reckon with flows of transcultural motion including social uprisings, religious fundamentalism, cyberspace, fashion, transportation, airports, ports, and other new phenomena. Today, this transcultural motion is being studied from diverse, theoretical perspectives and sometimes with distinctly different units and levels of analysis: the individual, the household, the state; the micro, the meso, the macro (Faist 1997). Anthropologists listen to the voices of migrants and analyze the rich content of their stories by paying attention to the various meanings they assign to their own actions and behavior.

After reviewing the multiplicity of theories, it is clear that there is no “grand” migration theory. Migration movements are too complex and resist any particular theoretical model or any specific, ready-made, conceptual framework. The reason is that globalization, which creates those movements, is itself very complex and multi-dimensional. As Pieterse puts it, “globalization invites more controversy than consensus” (Pieterse 2003:8). Therefore, it becomes necessary to scrutinize the various theoretical models in order to accommodate the broad facets, forms, types, players, motivations, and cultural and socio-economic realities of the phenomenon of migration (Davis, 1988). As Massey points out, we are now dealing with a “largely fragmented set of theories that have developed largely in isolation from one another” (Massey et al. 1993:432). Theoretical constructs of migration would become more coherent through the application of a multidisciplinary and inclusive paradigm that employs a holistic view in order to envelop its contemporaneous, complex, and paradoxical nature. Thus recent shifts in the anthropological enterprise cannot be considered a mere response to perceived empirical changes on the ground imposed by transnational phenomena, but rather a drastic revision of its major epistemological and foundational principles. Undoubtedly, most classical anthropologists largely failed to identify the category of the trans-local by only examining the larger context in which the societies and cultures being

studied were entangled or simultaneously being created. Within the prevalent ethnographic, monographic and unilateral models of the time, cultures were examined as bounded entities, which produced biased and limited research that created a number of controversies in the arena of anthropology.

Gupta and Ferguson (1992:7) argue that classical “ethnographic maps” have tried to explain the spatial distribution of peoples, tribes, and cultures as transcending nation-states. As Gupta and Ferguson aptly state,

In a world of diaspora, transnational culture flows, and mass movements of populations, old-fashioned attempts to map the globe as a set of culture regions or homelands are bewildered by a dazzling array of postcolonial simulacra, doublings and re-doublings, as India and Pakistan apparently reappear in postcolonial simulation in London, pre-revolution Tehran rises from the ashes in Los Angeles, and a thousand similar cultural dreams are played out in urban and rural settings all across the globe. In this culture-play diaspora, familiar lines between “here” and “there,” center and periphery, colony and metropole become blurred (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:10).

After scholars in anthropology reconfigured the culture concept, major changes started to take place in the field when they began to examine those connections and trajectories that tie the local to the global, addressing new phenomena under the umbrella of transnationalism. The problematization of the idea of the “field” as being fluid, multiple, and changing allows anthropologists to detach themselves from the traditional, exoticized and, at times, romanticized classical anthropological field. It is a break away, a form of liberation from the old ways in which anthropologists are historically, socially, personally, and intimately attached to the areas they study. Ossman (2007) considers this experience a path to freedom that opens up spaces for self-reflexivity and a deeper appraisal of the anthropological encounter with transnational issues. However, she reminds scholars of the need to be ethical because, only then, can they pave the way for a solid foundation for an anthropology of motion (Ossman 2007: 216). Moreover, anthropologists working on issues of migrant communities and diaspora have become increasingly uncomfortable with the conservative idea that the local was a suitable and sufficient form of ethnographic space (Falzon 2005). Transnationalism, migration studies, diasporas, cosmopolitanism, and

so on—all necessitate new methodologies and investigation tools that invite supra-local understanding and a suited research methodology. As Mintz (1998: 117) properly puts it, “(t)he new anthropology is many things, among them the study of human groups in motion. That motion is thought to be more than international; it is transnational.” Ossman discusses “pathways” and argues that transnational research dealing with “serial migration” should encompass the various scopes of global processes while scrutinizing local practices to better adapt to and understand our mobile world. Ossman (P. 3) contests the classical anthropological claims about scientific grounding and questions archaic methods of data analysis that fail to address most of the paradoxical aspects of transnational migration. She seems to advocate for a multi-locational research approach that crisscrosses national, cultural, and institutional borders and resonates with the nature of “serial migration” (Ossman 2007).

IV. Multi-sited Ethnography: New Challenges in the Field(s)

By virtue of its complexity and paradoxical nature, transnational research requires a specific methodology in which data is gathered in multiple localities, units, scales, and scopes of analysis. This type of research is being adopted by a number of anthropologists who work on transnational phenomena by moving away from classical geographies, methodologies, and scopes of investigation toward queries about a more tangible structure of social life. Transnational scholarship entails the utilization of approaches that are able “to capture the complex temporalities in which particular dynamics or relations occur” (Levitt et al. 2008:6). Marcus (1998) argues that single-sited ethnography fails to grapple with complex situations of fieldwork, namely those dealing with human mobility and requiring plural localities. According to him, multi-sited ethnography arose as a more convenient and sophisticated research design for ethnographers because “it moves out of the single sites and local situations of conventional ethnographic research designs to examine the circulations of cultural meanings, objects and identities in diffuse time-space” (Marcus 1998: 86). Marcus defines the concept as follows:

Multi-sited research is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography (Marcus 1998: 90).

The fields of multi-sited ethnography are diverse and encompass migration, communication, transportation, tourism, medicine, trafficking, business, development, fashion, media, and so forth. Multiple research projects get carried out in various localities, sometimes cross-globally, connecting the multiple geographical sites that bridge the distances between them. A famous example of multi-sited ethnography is Scheper-Hughes' controversial work on the international underground market for the trade of human organs. The utilization of multi-sited research emerged as a response to the complex issues dealing with socio-spatiality as discussed by Pries (1999, 2008). This form of data collection allows the design of transnational units of inquiry as analytical items whose references are located in more than one site. Under this innovative type of research, ethnography moves from its conventional single-site location, contextualized by macro-constructions of a larger social order, e.g., the capitalist world system, to multiple sites of observation and participation that cross-cut binary constructs such as the "local," the "global," the "lifeworld," and the "system" (Marcus 1998: 95). This type of ethnography greatly alters the relationship between anthropologists and their subjects and field sites, offering new insights on how mobility can be conceived, interpreted, and contextualized. The power of this method is that it delves into socio-cultural formations and practices that span cultural and geographical boundaries, linking local with trans-local social actors and institutions. Multi-sited research is also valuable in its dealing with transnational practices and social fields that transcend boundaries on theoretical and conceptual grounds. This design allows researchers to escape old nationalistic and master narratives by envisaging the relativistic quality of transnational settings and the resulting design of transnational research techniques. As Amelina and Faist write,

The research based on this methodology does not regard transnational practices as a result of cross-border circulations of people, commodities and ideas. Instead, it analyzes social trajectories and dynamics of cross-border circulations of people, commodities and ideas as a consequence of actors' dealings with the interferences of knowledge orders. (Amelina and Faist 2008: 18)

Moreover, in exploring the multiple experiences of migrants who have moved across plural localities and spaces, a multi-sited design offers background data pertinent to the topics under research. As such, different "trajectories" of action undertaken by transnational families, communities, organizations, and diasporas can be revealed through the study of social practices in multiple localities (Mazzucato 2008). Another superb example of multi-sited research is the work conducted by Kearney in his examination of the Yucatan (Kearney 1996). This ethnography does a brilliant job in situating transnational migration dynamics within the larger political and economic factors on both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border and in analyzing their change over time and their impacts on the migrants. The NAFTA agreements, the commercialization of Mexican agriculture, the reduction in tariffs on agricultural imports, and declining wages are only one tip of the iceberg that Kearney was successful in exploring. Kearney used multiple theoretical and methodological paradigms to study indigenous migrant communities across different parts of Mexico and the U.S. His informants are exclusively transnational because they live across various cultural and territorial borders and because they have always been situated in spaces of symbolic and political boundaries, e.g., as subaltern citizens of Mexico. They are neither global nor national nor local. Kearney soon realized that the discourses and practices he discovered could not be fathomed without taking into account the trans-regional, economic dynamics and the political relations between local, state, and federal actors in two countries (Kearney 1996).

A critique of multi-sited ethnography has been put forth by a few scholars such as Candea in his article, "Arbitrary Locations: In Defense of the Bounded Field-Site" (Candea 2009: 25-46), which informed a number of theoretical debates on the efficacy of this design commenting on what he sees as a

‘latter-day implicit holism.’ He is uncomfortable with the idea of delimited field-sites and advocates for an ethnography that sets up “arbitrary locations” and “self-imposed restrictions.” He also advocates for an ethnographic endeavor based on a scheme of “self-limitation,” in which the researcher becomes reflexive and self-critical of his/her methodological choices and research techniques. Candea’s critique of this which method is motivated by his concern about methodological reflexivity which absence might skew the research findings.

In her article, “In the Right Place at the Right Time: Reflections on Multi-Sited Ethnography in the Age of Migration,” Gallo discusses the question of holism (Gallo: 2009: 87-102). She uses her research experience among the Malayali migrants in Rome, Italy and in Ernakulam, India as an example of her own retrospective assessment of her multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork. She argues that scholars need to pay careful attention to the “meanings of movement” involved in the processes of following people. Movements and mobilities must become themselves “objects of study rather than its premises” (Gallo 2009). Her approach to multi-sited ethnography is also based on tracking the subject under study across spatial and temporal boundaries while paying attention to any potential conflicts that might transcend those boundaries. She concludes that “it is the possibility it offers to interrogate the ‘site’ of research, not as a pre-constituted dimension of social inquiry, but as a relational process and methodological device” (Gallo 2009: 99).

This particular focus on people’s mobility has become a preferable research avenue in transnational studies (Gupta and Ferguson, 1999). In studying mobility, the multi-sited research technique widens social science methodology by considering complex, transnational linkages. Different “trajectories” of action, for instance, of transnational families, communities, organizations, and diasporas can be better explained by the study of social practices in different localities (Mazzucato 2008).

V. Space and (im)mobility as Social Constructs

When an important area of contemporary, anthropological research takes a different approach to people's movements, place, time, mobility, media, science, and technology, it necessitates a radical shift from the conventional formulae of doing fieldwork. Contemporary discourse occurs in an environment of extreme mobility and within spatial and temporal frameworks that have been transformed by modern life's accelerated pace. "National" cultures are constantly decentered, invaded, and penetrated by global forces encapsulated in media, transnational capital, international NGOs, multinationals, supranational political institutions, and so forth. Thus notions of mobility and space are no longer geographical since they are now being conflated with the concept of time. In fact, one blurs with the other until both merge into a unified entity that can act as a full-fledged conceptual tool of action and analysis. Lefebvre writes: "(Social) space is a (social) product...the space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action; that in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power; yet that, as such, it escapes in part from those who would make use of it" (Lefebvre 1991: 26). This non-geographical notion of space has been coined the "spatial turn" and is a conceptual model in the social sciences that was introduced by Lefebvre and geographers such as Soja (1989). The spatial turn refers to the fact that "space" is a social construction just like many other categories in the field of social sciences to explain or examine socio-cultural phenomena. According to the spatial turn, physical location can symbolically indicate a number of social meanings that are culturally constructed and socially produced.

Massey (2005: 9) posits that our modern conceptualization of issues pertaining to space rests on three propositions: 1) space is recognized as the product of interrelations, as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny; 2) space is known as the sphere of the possible for the existence of multiplicity in the sense of contemporaneous plurality, i.e., as the sphere

in which distinct trajectories coexist, and the sphere, therefore, of coexisting heterogeneity; and 3) space is understood as always under construction.

The study of movement and mobility has become an integral part of social and anthropological research. Thus, politics, social life, and, increasingly, social theory have become a matter of contested “mobilities” and contested metaphors of the “mobile life.” According to Castells, mobility is central to the way in which people live in an increasingly “networked society” (Castells 1996). Thomsen (2005: 5) investigates three, wide-ranging themes pertaining to mobility: 1) mobility as a constructed social reality, i.e., how individuals construct notions of mobility in their everyday life and practice; 2) mobility as spatial coordination and transgression; and 3) mobility as a policy theme, i.e., developments in transport policy. Urry examines mobile spaces and technology, analyzing their effects on human subjects and the way they potentially are transformed, stating that

In our problematization of issues of movement, today we are witnessing a ‘mobility turn,’ a different way of thinking through the character of economic, social and political relationships. Such turn is spreading in and through social sciences, mobilizing analyses that have been historically static, fixed and concerned with predominantly aspatial ‘social structures.’ Contributions from cultural studies, feminism, geography, migration studies, politics, science studies, sociology, transport and tourism studies and so on are hesitatingly transforming social science and especially invigorating the connections, overlaps and borrowings with both physical science and with literary and historical studies. The mobility is post-disciplinary” (Urry 2007:6).

According to this debate on (im)mobility, I argue that the mobility of a certain category of migrants, i.e., the irregular ones, is of a problematic nature due to all of the spatial constraints that makes it hard for them to choose freely between mobility and immobility. Indeed, as much of the anthropological research of the last decades has appropriately confirmed, mobility and immobility are the result of complex choices, policies, negotiations, and practices carried out by different actors in different settings under different circumstances. Mobility and other forms of transnational movements and

practices, as Bhabha argues, do not take place in an imaginary “third space” (Bhabha 1990) that is hypothetically positioned “in-between” national zones.

Transnational practices span the three categories of place, space, and time; yet, this does not imply that transmigrants, as unbounded and “floating” social actors, are totally disconnected from local constraints and other social and political configurations and contingencies. One needs to clearly define who qualifies as transmigrant. In other words, what are the boundaries to transnationalism? This is an important question because the social construction of place and mobility and the notion of the “spatial turn” are not processes emanating from a vacuum. Rather, they obey norms of meaning-making based on the complex transnational economic, political, and cultural flows, as well as other complex configurations in place. In this case, politics, class, gender, regional origin, and religious faith emerge as critical determinants of migrants’ (im)mobility, destination, fulfillment, and transnationality. Thus it becomes clear that not all spaces, mobilities, and social relations can be regarded equally and uniformly because the very processes that produce trans-border movements also result in geographical immobility and social exclusion. Social relations are not fixed or located in place, but are constituted through various “circulating entities” (Latour 2014: 17).

Today, national boundaries are being constantly traversed by virtual processes of communication and exchange that do not involve human mobility, but instead involve money routing, internet, digital technologies, and other systems of satellite communications. The other forms of human mobility or migration, such as tourism, international consulting, and global business, do not entail migration. These mobilities, it appears, produce complex and paradoxical movements of people, objects both symbolic and non-symbolic, values both monetary and non-monetary, images, and ideas demonstrating the various contradictions of the concept of (im)mobility. Cohen (1996:516) draws from Hall’s [date] idea with the observation that “transnational bonds no longer have to be cemented by migration or by exclusive

territorial claims. In the age of cyberspace, a diaspora can, to some degree, be held together or re-created through the mind, through cultural artifacts and through a shared imagination.”

VI. The Role Social Networks

In this section, I demonstrate that, despite the restrictive policies of states to limit these mobilities, transnationalism through its various resources, i.e., human, financial, ideological, and symbolic, will somehow succeed in “lubricating” the mobility “engine.” I also examine the network-driven aspect of transnational migration and the role it plays in generating various flows of migrants from impoverished countries to wealthy ones. While addressing this issue, I look at the various mechanisms and tools that Western states, both Northern European and North American, use to control their borders and determine whether they have had any substantial effect in preventing or deterring potential flows of migrants. I show that the border-control policies contain numerous gaps and often act as a vehicle for increasing irregular migration and fueling the “migration industry,” including human trafficking and migrant smuggling. In doing so, I demonstrate that “(im)mobility,” similarly to irregular migration, is a transnationally produced condition, shaped by the global market’s demand for cheap, flexible, docile labor.

Massey defines a “migration network” as a composite of interpersonal relations in which migrants interact with their families and friends across borders (Massey et al. 1998). His approach focuses on those factors that are embedded in the broad and strong linkages that unite potential migrants with their friends and/or relatives who have been successful in their migration experience. According to Massey, these linkages are likely to fuel the desire to migrate, thereby constituting the main incentive towards migration and thus initiating new migratory movements, which, in turn, generate other movements creating the phenomenon of chain migration (Massey et al. 1998). Tilly puts it beautifully: “it is not people who migrate but networks” (1990: 79). Social networks, I argue, help newly established migrants

find jobs, shelter, and even wives. Notably, many Tunisian migrants have a variety of social networks and kinship ties in Italy, France, Germany, and Holland and spoke about them as the bridge that will link them with “Paradise Europe” (Khedher 2007:91). Most participants in this study as well as those in my previous research referred to Italy or *Lorop* (the word they use for Europe) as “paradise.” The concept of *al Janna* (paradise) is often used by Tunisian youth and fed by “inflated” and “aesthetic” images transferred through their family members or friends abroad, creating a strong quest for the West with its seemingly attractive consumer culture and lifestyle (Khedher 2008: 14-24).

In their chapter, “Return to Aztlan,” Massey et al. map out this social-networks trend by examining the various means through which Mexican migration to the U.S. is sustained and perpetuated. Using case studies of four different communities of Mexican migrants, the authors note that social ties are more likely to develop when migrants share common backgrounds, kinship, *paisanaje* (being from the same place), and friendship (Massey et al. 1987:140-145). Their main argument is that the formation of social bonds helps most migrants alleviate the difficulties of the migration experience, increasing the desire for others to migrate and reinforcing the migrants’ network in return. Moreover, they say that social networks, interpersonal ties, and webs of kinship are not solely based on material exchanges but can take various forms such as favors, services, moral support, and so forth (Massey et al. 1987). Social networks thus create a form of social capital operating across borders, lubricating people’s movements, and also providing a set of information that could lower the costs and risks of migration (Massey et al. 1998: 42-43). These social networks provide migrants with a strong feeling of identity as well as a sense of belonging and membership that is necessary for strengthening the network. Moreover, Massey et al. emphasize the importance of voluntary and non-lucrative institutions and sports clubs, such as soccer clubs, that serve as a space where information about job opportunities and access to healthcare and/or social benefits get exchanged regularly, reinforcing migrants’ social ties (Massey et al. 1987). These

social networks strengthen over time because of the amount and variety of exchanges, i.e., information, goods, and so on, between the sending country, i.e. Mexico, and the U.S. In addition, Massey et al. discuss the formation of “daughter communities,” which means the emergence of new communities in the U.S. that are a continuity of the same community in a particular site in Mexico (Massey et al. 1987:153). The formation of these communities is a good example of how far the process can go as the network becomes “self-perpetuating.” This migration network pattern creates specific groupings of specific communities that end up living together in particular locations of the receiving society. Accordingly, these communities start to form settlements that reinforce the migration process, increasing economic and social ties while engendering more and more settlements that act like “magnets for further migration” (Massey et al. 1990- 1987:157-163).

In the context of this social network scheme, migration continues not only because it is physically difficult to stop, but mainly because of the strength of the networks which make it very unlikely to be stopped (Arango 2004; Bloch 2013; Lancee 2010; Massey et al. 1987; Ryan 2011; Bloch et al 2011, Zontini 2010; de Haas 2008). As Arango puts it, “The importance of networks for migration can hardly be overstated... [they] rank amongst the most important explanatory factors for migration” (2004: 28).

In this section, I analyzed the impact of social networks on the lubrication of the migration process; however, there are networks that weaken or could have existed, but do not. In this respect, the social network model is not always a steady and self-perpetuating process because it is shaped by multiple, macro-geopolitical, and economic forces, as well as international and national migration policies over which individuals have little or no control.

VII. Conclusion

In this chapter, I argued that a comprehensive discussion about transnational people's movements is necessary in order to understand the mechanisms under which contemporary irregular migration, as a multifaceted phenomenon, operates. I reviewed most of the literature pertaining to transnational scholarship and demonstrated that there is no complete theory for transnational migration. Yet, anthropology with its multi-sited ethnographic design can help scholars move away from simplistic theorization to capture and problematize the various dichotomies surrounding trans-border movements such as local-global, rural-urban, time-space, mobility-immobility, mono-sited/multi-sited, and so on. I have demonstrated how the intensity, velocity, and fluidity of the transnational flows of people, objects, ideas, symbols, pictures, and so on not only contributes to a new understanding of borders and people movements, but also blurs the very foundation that allows these dichotomies to emerge, i.e., the nation-state and its boundaries.

I looked at different types of transnational movements and pulled out a number of disparities with regards to the operation of their flows, such as their different levels of embeddedness in the socio-economic and geopolitical structures in place. In analyzing these disparities, I also tried to show that people involved in transnational border crossings are heterogeneous actors possessing different socio-demographic, economic, and political endowments. I gave a definition of multi-sited research and demonstrated its appropriateness in dealing with trans-border ethnographies as well as its efficacy in unpacking complex issues pertaining to transnational socio-spatiality and mobility.

In doing so, I also reviewed some of the critiques of this type of research, showing that most of it is based on concerns about methodological reflexivity, and I gave examples of how ethnographers could address them. The concept of spatial turn is an effective tool that anthropologists could use to explain and examine a set of social meanings as they relate to various aspects of our mobile, postmodern lives. I

elaborated on the idea that “space” is no longer a frozen and stable entity, but rather a social construction and a process that is constantly invented, contested, negotiated, and reproduced. I presented cases where the spatial turn is not just a nuanced and metaphoric construct employed theoretically, but a real and concrete entity that is endowed with a territorial specificity and could also be historically and geographically contextualized. I also argued that in addition to space, the concept of mobility should also be carefully examined because not all spaces, movements, and mobilities are equal and uniform. I noted that spaces and social boundaries are increasingly detached from territorial and national boundaries, taking on distinct identities and affiliations. I concluded by arguing that migrant mobility has usually been related to voluntary migrants or others who freely move in and out of national borders. By analyzing social network theory through some ethnographic examples, I demonstrated that, despite the restrictive policies of states to limit these mobilities, transnationalism through its various resources, i.e., human, financial, ideological, and symbolic, will constantly ease the processes of mobility. Conversely, despite the massive border control operations around it, the Mediterranean Sea remains the most open and dangerous transit separating Europe from its southern neighbors. As stated by De Haas (2014) “increased border controls do not stop migration.” Transnationalism is a complex, peculiar process that, if used adequately, can yield numerous and broader assessments of the most complex trans-border practices and discourses pertaining to power relations, mobilities, identities, social organization, and many other human arrangements and manifestations.

CHAPTER FIVE

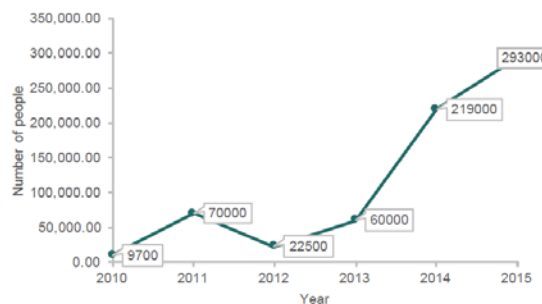
FROM TUNISIA TO LAMPEDUSA: SELECTED PERSONAL NARRATIVES

I. Introduction

Since the popular uprising that shook Tunisia in December 2010-2011, some 35,000 Tunisian irregular migrants have arrived by sea on the southern Italian island of Lampedusa creating what Cuttita calls “the Tunisian turn” (Cuttitta 2014:203). Regarding what he referred to as a “human emergency,” Cuttita writes that

On 12 February there were 4000 migrants sleeping on the streets; 1,500 were eventually “hosted” in the local football ground. The day after, the Italian government declared a state of humanitarian emergency on the entire national territory. Only then was the Lampedusa center re-opened, and still there were thousands of migrants who did not find accommodation there, its capacity being of only 804 persons (Cuttitta 2014: 210).

Figure 3: Migrants arriving by sea to Europe



Source: UNHCR (2015c SO-2) – note; data recorded until 24th August 2015

Fig 7. Migrants arriving by sea to Europe

What experientially happens to the migrants before and when they land on Lampedusa rarely reaches the public and, if it does, it is often via exaggerated, mainstream-media narratives that confuse public opinion and inflame the overall migration debate. What is known is that the sea passage to, and the landing on, Lampedusa are dangerous experiences in which migrants are vulnerable to the vicissitudes of nature and to human mistreatment and abuse throughout all stages of the journey. Several thousands of Tunisian

men attempting to cross the Mediterranean have died or suffered various ordeals and injury. According to the Tunisian Consul General in Palermo, Italy, more than 850 Tunisian irregular migrants drowned while heading to Lampedusa at the end of March, 2011 only (Interview 07/23/2014).

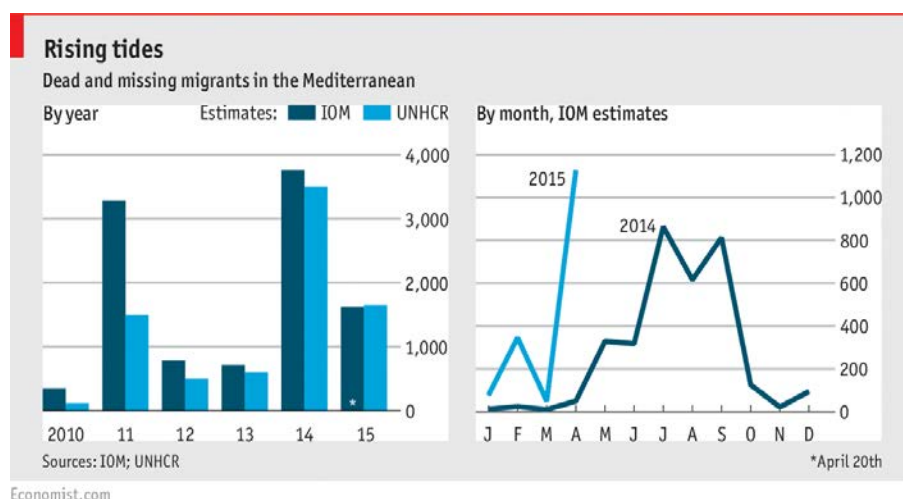


Fig 8. Dead and Missing Migrants in the Mediterranean

From the start of their trip, Tunisian migrants suffer human rights abuses as they interact with the various parties involved, e.g., smugglers, Tunisian and European navies and coast guards, and police. When get caught in Italy, they are arrested and then locked up in detention centers for months, where they undergo lengthy administrative procedures and face imminent deportation. Between April 28 and November 14, 2011, a total of 3,380 Tunisians were deported from Lampedusa or Italy while only 13,000 were granted residency permits (Interview 07/23/2014). Unfortunately, the data regarding Tunisian irregular migration are scarce because of the migration's clandestine nature and its rapidity, as well as the high mobility of the migrants. Figuring out the exact numbers of irregular migrants is like trying to "count the uncountable" (Triandafyllidou, 2010). Also, since irregular migrants live in the shadows and almost never get reported, their total numbers in Italy are often "guesstimates," based on reports provided by Ministry of the Interior or Frontex. The apprehension records provided by Frontex are considered to be the most reliable data on irregular migrant flows (Triandafyllidou, 2010).

In this chapter, I examine the testimonies of Tunisian irregular migrants living in Lampedusa, Sicily, and Hay Ettadhamen, which I obtained through interviews with them. I use these diverse narratives in order to illustrate and analyze their experiences of “Otherization” and “dehumanization.” I also explore their hardships, dangers, violence, and suffering from their departure point to their landing in Lampedusa, focusing on four specific stages of the voyage: pre-departure, the sea crossing, detention, and life outside in Italian society. Each step of the migrant’s journey is scrutinized to depict the reality of this experience. As well, I highlight the emotional toll and the psychological impact on these migrants—aspects of the journey that is often overlooked or unexplored in the migration literature.

II. Figurative Use of the Word *Harqa*

The phenomenon of crossing borders without going through official, legal, and administrative procedures is described by the use of different terminologies and figurative expressions: illegal migration, undocumented migration, invisible migration, *migration sauvage* (wild migration), unauthorized migration, clandestine migration, and irregular migration. The Tunisian term for this type of migration is *harqa*. From the 1960s to early 1980s, different words in the Tunisian vernacular were used to describe the action of illegally crossing national borders, i.e., irregular migration. During this time, the most common illegal passage for many Tunisians was via land with Libya as a main destination. Back then, the common terms, *mezigri* and *fallega*, were used to refer to Tunisian illegal migrants. *Mezigri* is transformed from the French word, *immigrés* (migrants), while *fallega* was originally used by French colonial authorities in the 1940s and 1950s, especially in reference to Algerian dissidence and to enemy combatants during the Algerian war of independence. Thus it invokes the reckless, the disobedient, and the transgressor of legal authority (Mabrouk 2003:13). However, *harqa* (burning), a metaphor for irregular migration, is a new terminology without any known historical roots or social use in the daily Tunisian vernacular. However, other uses of *harqa* and its derivative in Tunisian vernacular have various meanings: 1) to tell someone about

what another did in order to get the latter in trouble, e.g., *harqu maa arfou* (He burned him to his boss/employer); 2) to describe an action, such as driving through a red traffic light, that will get a person into trouble, e.g., *hraq ethaw* (She burned the traffic red light); and 3) to describe the feeling of pain over the loss of a dear one to the point of suffering, e.g., *Foolen mahrouk ala flen aziiz aaliyh* (A person is burned by the loss of someone dear to him). Further, *harqa* is used by Tunisian mothers when they lose a son or a daughter whom they consider their “*qibda*” (liver), for example, *qbdti tharqet or qbdti mahrouqa* (My liver was burned). Thus, the mother of Ridha who was lost after a shipwreck said, “Ever since the shipwreck, I have been unable to eat, sleep, or even to function normally. Ridha *hraq w’ hraqli qbdti maah*” (Ridha burned and burned my liver in turn)” (Interview 08/15/2013).

The word *harqa* comes from the Arabic trilateral root (*ha-ra-qa*), in reference to the pre-voyage incineration of all forms of documentation that could help authorities identify individual migrants. The term, *حرقه harqa* (irregular migration), began to be used during early 1990s primarily by people involved with this particular type of migration. However, *حرق harqa* does not, in any way, refer to something that evokes irregular migration. Moreover, this expression also exists in neighboring Algeria and Morocco where it is pronounced and transcribed as *harga* or *hriq* and is similarly employed to refer to the phenomenon of irregular migration in both countries. A common consensus is that *yahraq* (to burn) is a term that invokes the deliberate actions of irregular migrants, i.e., burning documents and destroying all evidence about who they are so that the police will not be able to reconstruct their identities or successfully determine where they come from. Some informants said that with this act the “burners” would have the potential to lie about who they are in order to avoid any imminent repatriation (Field notes 03/05/14). This tactic was especially used during the late 1980s and early 1990s by some irregular migrants who were successfully granted refugee status and remained in Italy (Mabrouk 2003).

In addition, the figurative word *harqa*, according to some informants, is used to refer to the act of a migrant burning his fingertips so to more easily conceal their identity and successfully apply for political asylum.¹⁴ This act could also mean that the person was symbolically burning his macabre past in order to start a new life in his imagined “Paradise Europe” (Khedher 2007, 2008). Moreover, this rapid metamorphosis from identifiable to non-identifiable would allow him to be a new, successful human being once he penetrated *Lorop* (Europe). The *hariq* (burner) would also deliberately use the term “*harqa*” in a symbolic way to think of himself as a newly born and a pure, unpolluted person free of guilt and remorse. Since most migrants feel culpable because of their unemployment, poverty, and destitution, they experience themselves as dirty, heavy social burdens; therefore, the fire implied in this “burning” cleans and purifies them. (Khedher 2007). For the purpose of this study and for the sake of uniformity, I have deliberately opted to alternately use the two expressions, “irregular migration,” and the term used by the study population, *harqa*, in order to describe this particular type of migration.

III. Pre-departure

Harraqa (human smugglers) have been operating in Tunisia since the early 1990s; however, their business really began to exponentially flourish during and after the 2011 uprising due to the unstable political situation and lawlessness that characterized the country. The *harqa* phenomenon became a very profitable business for smuggling networks turning thousands of young Tunisian migrants into very valuable commodities. As noted by Massey et al., the strong demand for global cheap labor creates “a lucrative economic niche for entrepreneurs and institutions dedicated to promoting international movement for profit, yielding a black market in migration” (1993:450). In this section of the chapter, I describe the way the *harqa* phenomenon is structured and operated as a successful business practice.

¹⁴ I discuss the issue of self-inflicted harm in Chapter 7.

i. Recruitment

The news of *harqa* is spread via word-of-mouth by a *laggat* or *wasiit* (middleman), who tracks down young men in Hay Ettadhamen interested in migrating to Italy. Advance payments for *al harqa* (the irregular sea passage) are sometimes collected to pay the various parties involved before the clandestine embarkation. The *wasiit* is often assisted by several young men who receive all kinds of privileges from him such as money, cigarettes, alcohol, and food. As a reward, these young men, who are often unemployed, even receive large discounts on the price they would pay for their own sea crossing. The luckiest ones manage to secure a guaranteed large number of potential migrants, i.e., usually eight to ten, and as a reward, the middleman might give them a free trip. This is relatively rare in general but was common in the post-uprising period. The middlemen and their assistants frequent particular cafés where they receive information about any potential candidates planning to leave. They establish a primary list of people, take down their cellphone numbers, and remain in close contact with them in order to negotiate the price of the passage and to discuss departure time and location.

The factors that determine the *harqa* price are weighed by the middleman, the captain, and the owner of the *chqaf* (boat). Like most of the prices for goods and services in Tunisia, the *harqa* fee is not fixed, and bargaining is very common and also expected. The middleman collects the price of *harqa*, which is flexible; it is not strictly the same fee for all migration candidates, nor is it the same fee one pays for a summer, spring, fall, or winter sea crossing. Thus the *harqa* cost varies according to all these factors and many more such as the socio-economic status, etc since it gets modified like the prices of most merchandise, depending on the laws of supply-and-demand and overall market movements. For the same passage, one migration candidate might pay 500 to 1,000 dinars while another could pay 1,200 or 1,400 dinars. Non-Tunisians and especially *il brayniyya* (literally foreigners, but referring primarily to Tunisians

who are not locals of the departure-point location) might even pay 2,500 dinars.¹⁵ I was recently told that the price of a “secured” *harqa*, such as *harqat Al Jarbouaa*,¹⁶ currently ranges between 3,500 to 5,000 dinars. This dramatic increase in the cost of *harqa* could be explained by the tighter, border-control measures deployed by Tunisia and the EU in deterring human flows across the Mediterranean. *Harqa* fees also depend on whether the migrant is alone or among family. Two brothers or two cousins could travel together with one paying full price while the second enjoys a deep discount. Some potential migrants might even have a free passage without paying one *millime* (equivalent to a penny), especially if he is one of three brothers or cousins. It is very common for brothers, male cousins, and other relatives to decide to take the trip together to take advantage of the price reduction as well as to feel protected and secure during the dangerous sea crossing as well as when they land in Lampedusa.

This research showed that the majority of migrants got financial assistance from family and friends as well as from close relatives abroad who would occasionally agree to finance the whole cost of the *harqa*. Some young men resorted to stealing or selling various items, such as electronics, brand-name clothes, expensive watches, and so on, which they looted from supermarkets and stores during the uprising in order to finance their trip. For example, Boubaker told me that two of his friends, Amer and Sidqi, rented a pick-up truck and headed to *Géant*, a large supermarket in Al Mnihla, to grab whatever they could after its famous mall had been broken into by thugs a couple of days after the uprising. Amer and Sidqi came back with two refrigerators, four plasma TVs, microwaves, and various other products that they sold quickly for the amount of 8,000 dinars, which was way below the actual price. On the dawn of that same night, Amer and Sidqi burned from Raf Raf, a coastal village, near the city of Bizerte (field notes 20/18/14). Others used a variety of strategies to get money. Some relied on their mothers, such as Elyes, who told me that his

¹⁵ The current average monthly wage for Tunisians is between 500-600 TND (the equivalent of 250-300 \$US).

¹⁶ *Al Jarbouaa* is literally a “rat” in Tunisian vernacular; also, *Al Jarbouaa* is a famous smuggler known for securing successful sea crossings to Lampedusa.

mother had to sell all her jewelry at a very low price in order to get him the right amount of money to pay the smuggler (Field notes 06/15/14). Another was Souheil who had to wait for a transfer of 1,500 dinars from his cousin Chehir via Western Union from Milan. This cousin had been living in Italy since 2002 and managed to quickly find Souheil a job at a chicken factory in Ancona. Although Souheil tried to pay him back, Chehir refused to take the money (Field notes 05/12/14).

Even though migrants prefer to pay on shore before the boat leaves, i.e., pay-as-you-go, to avoid scams, *wasiits* want advance payments one week before the sailing takes place because they claim that they have to pay the captain. When migrants entrust the advance to them, they can run away with the money. In this case, the migrants would have no recourse to the authorities as they simply have no proof of payment and also resist contacting the police for fear of arrest. Fraj, a middle-aged man, described one such scam to me. He had decided to leave, not because he wanted to escape Tunisia, but because he had had no job for the last six years. He started to engage in contraband activities by smuggling gas from Libya through the southeastern Tunisian border town of Ben Guerdane to resell in Tunisia. Fraj spent so much money bribing the Tunisian police at the border that he had to spend the next two years smuggling more oil to earn money for his journey to Lampedusa. He managed to pay 500 dinars to the *wasiit* who ran off with the money. Of this middleman, Fraj said,

The *wasiit* named Faycal was a sailor and local man from Zarzis who was deported from France a few years ago. Faycal started the business of *harqa* right after the uprising. He is known for charging much less than the others since the passage with him would cost you barely 500 dinars and you could still bargain. Yet, he is also infamous for being fraudulent and dishonest because many migrants were deceived and ripped off on various occasions when they had to deal with him. I am one of his many victims (Interview 08/25/2013).

Many *wasiits* are known to be sheer opportunists who have no interest in getting boats safely to Lampedusa and, in fact, would rather have boats capsize in the Mediterranean so there would be no survivors who could report to authorities and police. The Tunisian authorities have arrested a number of *wasiits* because they lack any kind of structure except for a loose organization or simply cannot pay a

generous bribe. However, many succeed, thanks to corrupt, law enforcement officials who were thriving on the lavish bribes they were getting out of this “business” (Field notes, 10/15/2014). In the post-uprising context, bribery flourished and touched most domains. Traffic police and border police are famous for taking bribes.

The middleman demands cash payment in *dinars*, the Tunisian currency, for fear of being paid in false, foreign currencies, especially U.S. dollars. If the payment is on shore, the *wasiit* prefers large notes in denominations of 50, 30, or 20 dinars in order to not waste time counting out the money and to minimize the risk of police intervention and potential arrest. Some informants told me that a number of migrants avoided the middleman altogether by organizing themselves and collecting money to buy their own boat (Interview 03/04/2014). The middleman also makes sure that the burners pay the complete, negotiated amount of money and that they do not carry items such as drugs, weapons, political documents, religious books, and announcements. He also checks them on board to make sure the passage takes place under good and safe conditions. One man, who acted as both *wasiit* and captain, boasted that since the uprising, he had helped over 2,000 men get to Italy without being caught by the police. He claims that he is helping desperate young people get a better life and Tunisia a better economy. He even stated that he has helped save more than 50 irregular migrants on various occasions while at sea. He added that it is his duty to come to the rescue whenever he can, especially since rescue organizations and coast guards are often absent or sometimes deliberately refuse to provide help (20/06/2014).

ii. At the *Gouna*

The *wasiit* is responsible for hosting potential migrants for a short period of time before the actual passage takes place. Once migrants pay their *harqa* fees, they are immediately transported to clandestine shelters (*gouna* in Tunisian vernacular), which are often located on abandoned farms or deserted beaches at the fringes of remote coastal villages. The waiting period ranges between a few days to one week or a few

weeks, depending on the weather conditions and also on how fast the *wasiit* can gather sufficient clients to make the passage financially worthwhile. While waiting for the *harqa* departure, the migrants lose total contact with the outside world. Abidi, a Tunisian journalist, describes these *gounas*:

To avoid a potential arrest by the Tunisian police, the smugglers have premises known as *gouna* where would-be migrants are kept for several days prior to departure. These facilities, which are usually dwellings, shacks, or abandoned garages, are heavily concentrated all along the coast and in the rural areas and villages immediately inland. *Gounas* have been found in *Zarzis* in the southeast of the country and even in the petroleum port of *Skhira*, to the south of *Sfax* (the second largest city after Tunis) which acts as a gathering point (My translation; Abidi, 2003).

The *gouna* hosts are responsible for accommodation and food and are paid about 500 to 1,000 dinars per night, depending on the number of people and/or how many days they are being hosted. The host prepares beds that are often worn-out mattresses, *kelims* (Tunisian hand-woven rugs), blankets, or flattened cardboard boxes on the floor. The host also prepares light meals, which are often *harrissa* (chili sauce) sandwiches with olive oil, olives, and sardines or canned tuna. If the waiting time becomes long, some hosts even make other forms of profit from the potential migrants by selling them newspapers, cigarettes, medication, alcohol, and *zatla* (hashish) at prices higher than those of the market. The host often uses a guard/assistant who watches the *gouna* and is in charge of doing the daily shopping for items such as bread, milk, coffee, and cigarettes.

I interviewed Selim, a tattooed, well-built young man in his mid-twenties, in a local café in Lampedusa in July 2014. He recounted his *gouna* experience:

We were about 40 people. Some were from Libya and Egypt. I could tell from the dialects they were using. But most were Tunisian men from the ages of 16 to 50. There were two young women with their husbands who seemed to be related to the *wasiit* as they received special treatment. We spent 16 days and recited the Quran the whole time because the *wasiit* told us that the place has been spotted and that the police could come at any time.

We finally left the *gouna* after spending three weeks there, which seemed like an eternity. Stress became very intense because the planned departure dates were often cancelled or postponed due to rough waters or sea storms. We were crushed against one another, and the oxygen became scarce inside the small, dusty, unventilated room. We were like sardines in a small tin. One evening, we were all attacked by a group of thugs who took all our money, food,

and cell phones. We could not react because the host and the *wasiit* ordered us to obey and not to resist. We felt that we had been cheated but had no means to react or do anything (Interview 07/10/2013).

Stories like this about the *gouna* experience are frequent; however, many migrants are reluctant to report their experiences out of fear of reprisals by the *wasiits* and by local authorities who might arrest them, thereby thwarting the entire journey to Lampedusa.

Once out of the *gouna*, migrants are then taken to the coast during a preferably moonless night with pick-up trucks carrying 20 to 50 persons at a time. Ports on the east coast, i.e., Al Hawariyya, Sfax, Monastir, Mahdia, and Zarzis, are the primary departure points for most of these clandestine crossings. Drivers usually received about 500 dinars for each trip and drive a *estafette* (van) or a *camion semi-remorque* (delivery truck) with a covered roof so that the passengers are concealed. Some drivers employ clever tactics to mislead the police, such as wetting the truck with water so that the police would think their cargo was fish or vegetables. These trips are always conducted late at night to avoid confrontations with police authorities and the possibility of being arrested.

IV. The Sea Crossing

For the majority of the study population, the sea crossing is a bittersweet experience because it represents the beginning of the realization of their dream. However, it is also a game of life and death and is referred to as a *qmaar* (gamble).

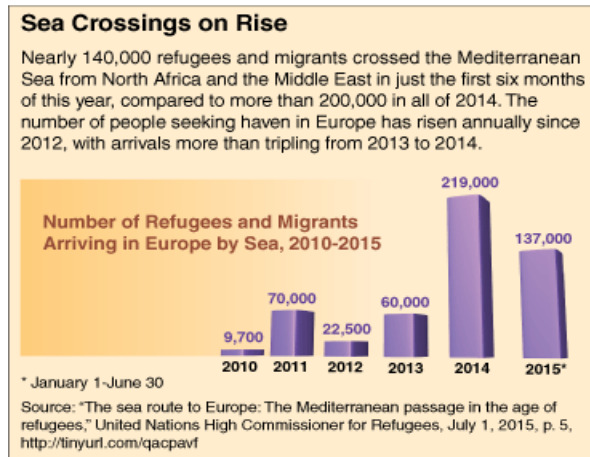


Fig 9. Sea Crossings on Rise

i. The Boat and Ferryman

The sea passage often takes place in a *chqaf*¹⁷ (wooden fishing vessel) or inflatable boats, both with a capacity of 20 to 40 people. Frequently, the migrants are shown a sample boat, which is in better shape than the actual boat on which they will be transported. "They lied to us," says Chokri, a 33-year-old young man from Zarzis. "They told us the boat would be brand-new and well-equipped, but it wasn't." He continues,

Once you make your decision to get on these boats, you have to be convinced that there is no way to go back, even if you know that it is a 50/50 chance and that the risk of death is high. As a matter of fact, death for us is not an issue; we are never afraid to die and whatever Allah decides for us, we accept it with an open heart. *Il mout qatha w' qadar* (Death is everyone's destiny) (Interview 07/28/2013).

The trip to Lampedusa might take from seven to ten hours or a full day under optimal conditions; however, bad weather may mean a few days or even weeks. Karim, a 27-year-old migrant from the coastal village of Chebba, said,

There were 124 of us on the boat. They told us the trip would only take eight hours, but it was not true. We spent three days at sea [sigh!]. It was a terrifying journey. We took things for granted and thought we were unsinkable. It was a big mistake! But due to what I went through, I will never do it again (Interview 09/08/2013).

¹⁷ *Chqaf* is the word Tunisians employ to refer to the boat being used for *Al harqa*

The risk of being in a shipwreck is extremely high because most of the sea crossings in the post-uprising period were conducted by amateurs unfamiliar with the waters of the Sicilian Channel, resulting in hundreds of migrant boats capsized off the coastal shores of Tunisia and Libya. The following account was given to me by Si Saied, a 60-year-old man and the father of Wissem, a 28-year-old Tunisian who perished in a shipwreck on his way to Lampedusa. Si Saied explained the escalating number of deaths at sea during and after the uprising:

My son was 28, in the spring of his life! [in tears...] Wissem was a carpenter in Sayyada. I didn't know about his plans to flee to Lampedusa and intentions to migrate...Had I known, I would have prevented him...I got the news of his death from his best friend Ali who burned with him and was lucky to survive...Before the revolution the organizers of these trips were professional sailors accustomed to the sea and its unpredictability; they also respected the capacity of their vessels and never took a risk. After the revolution, anyone could claim to sail to Lampedusa and many amateurs who know nothing about the sea and who had never sailed before did it for the sole aim of making money. You can see how many victims got drowned just like Wissem. It is a "*qartha*" (tragedy) [sigh] (Interview, 09/15/2013).

The majority of these boats, like the one boarded by Wissem and others, are old fishing vessels, ill-equipped for sailing and lacking basic safety equipment and navigation systems. These boats are also designed to be unidentified, with no names and flying no flags, in order to avoid detection by official authorities and coast guards. During the post-uprising period, many sea-faring men, who had been primarily engaged in fishing activities, had debts they could no longer repay and were forced to either sell or rent their boats or become ferrymen. Thus, these former fishermen now greatly benefit from the *harqa* industry. Chawki, a local fisherman from the Il Mwansa district in Zarzis, told me that

Clandestine migration has now become a major source of income for many fishermen here in Zarzis. It is a huge business that generates a lot of money: 1,000 times more than what we make from fishing. Hundreds of families "*taaql min al harqa*" (live off this phenomenon) (Interview 09/03/2013).

According to informants, ferrymen also make money by duping naïve migrants with "false" disembarkations. They would land the boats in places like Querquennah, a Tunisian island near Sfax, and

tell passengers they had arrived in Lampedusa. Other migrants were abandoned in deserted Tunisian beaches, such as those near the northern coastal towns of Bizerte and Hawariyya.

ii. Dangers at Sea

Many migrants, especially those from the western parts of Tunisia, have barely been on the sea before and have no idea what to do in case the boat capsizes; nor do they know how to swim. Makram, a frail-looking young man in his early thirties, knows first-hand the risks young Tunisians take when they embark on the perilous journey to Lampedusa:

“You literally give yourself over to death. Once we were in the harbor, we were put in line in twos to start boarding the boat. It was a chaotic situation when everyone started to shout and yell, trying to get a place on that old boat...As I was about to embark, I was shocked at the number of people who were crammed against each other on this little, timeworn boat. There were probably over 100 people between the ages of 15 and 45. As we all got on board and the boat started to sail, the sea grew very rough with waves exceeding two meters high, filling up the boat with water and creating a situation of panic.

The captain told everyone that the boat will not make it to Italy due to bad weather conditions and added that he would be sailing back to Zarzis because he was afraid that the boat would capsize. This situation happens a lot because we migrants often get duped and return to Tunisia with empty hands...The money and the dream evaporated, but I will try again. (08/14/2013)

Of his sea-crossing experience, Bassem, a 20-year-old, former carpenter from Medenine had this to say:

The water was like glass when we sailed off the coast of Al Hawariyya. Everyone started to shout *Allahou Akbar*, clapping hands and chanting. Soon, the waves got rough, and the boat started to shake, almost flipping over and filling with water. Everyone was busy emptying the vessel and praying, and I saw myself dead already. At around 3:00 in the morning, the sea got even rougher, and the boat started to swirl as we were sailing far away from the coast. We all got terribly seasick and started to vomit. I truly wanted to die. This shows how foolish I was to take such a boat ride and go for such a deadly adventure. As we were screaming, the captain didn't listen to us and shouted that we all had to keep quiet. It was such a horrifying experience. It was one of the days you would rather forget.

As the boat was sailing, we nearly crashed on what looked like a small island, not Lampedusa though. The boat almost flipped over, but we tried to keep calm and get the boat to stabilize a little bit by moving around on both sides in order to create balance. The Tunisian coast guard sailed over to us and asked us to return to Tunisia. When we refused, they told us to be careful, wished us good luck, and waved good-bye.

We continued the trip, and suddenly everyone started vomiting again because the waves were churning with greater intensity until the view became obstructed. The boat began to shake, being tossed around by the high, crashing waves, and water started to rapidly fill the boat again. Many fell into the sea; others were clinging to the edge of the boat, shouting and screaming. Many started praying and reciting the *shahada*¹⁸ out loud. Again, the captain was trying to calm everyone down, but to no avail. The state of panic was extreme and the situation was totally out of control (Interview 08/22/2013).

Mahdi, a man in his thirties, sighed as he described the horrible scenes from a shipwreck he was in during a sea journey from Sfax to Lampedusa:

I jumped out of the boat; the crashing high waves totally covered me. There was total panic as people started fighting for lifejackets. Everyone moved towards one side of the boat until the vessel completely lost balance. Within a few minutes, the rotten old boat capsized. Many passengers were already floating in the water, being pushed away by the strong waves. Some were screaming and shouting *Allahou Akbar!* ...

I found myself under the boat when my hand caught a piece of wood to which I clung until the fishing boat nearby came to the rescue. Bodies, slippers, hats, plastic bags, and packs of cigarettes were floating in the water...I was trying to float and could feel a body underneath. I dragged it by force to the surface. It was my friend Omar. He was dead. I do not even want to remember this scene as it was very disturbing and horrific. It was a big “*qabous*” (nightmare)! That is all I can remember (Interview 06/14/2013).



Fig 10. Shipwreck in Lampedusa
Photo taken by Rayed Khedher on August 08, 2014

¹⁸ The *shahada* is the Muslim vow that is uttered before death.

Mustapha, a 22-year-old young man from Mahdia, also recalled falling into the sea:

We suddenly found ourselves in the sea with water reaching our necks. There was a fishing boat nearby. As I was swimming towards it, the waves were pushing me backwards making it harder for me to move forward any longer. Finally, a *balansi* (small fishing boat) approached us. The Tunisian fishermen aboard started throwing lifejackets and ropes and helped us get on their boat, but quickly for fear of being spotted by the Italian coast guard. As I looked back, our unfortunate boat completely sank and disappeared from view (06/02/2013).

Another man who went overboard was Mohammed, a 27 year-old, black Tunisian from Gabes, who was sitting with me next to the gate of Caltanissetta's *Contrada Pian del Lago* Detention Center. He gave a bitter smile and said,

We sailed for 15 hours, but then the boat engine broke. I was exhausted and seasick, but managed to swim a distance of one mile until I got back to shore. Only five survived. Everyone else was swallowed by the high waves of the Mediterranean. I swallowed gallons of water! But *al hamdulillah* (Praise to God), I survived... (Interview 09/16/2014).

As these narratives illustrate, the risk of death seems to outweigh the risk of staying in Tunisia. Most migrants are fully aware that they may perish in the Mediterranean Sea; yet, they are willing to take the trip and try their luck. Many consider it as their last option for survival, and the likelihood of dying does not seem to bother them or make them change their minds. The argument of *maqroub, qatha w' qadar* (destiny and calling) was frequently emphasized in my conversations with them. It seems that only God decides whether they will die or successfully make it to *Lorop* (Europe), and death is something they try not to think about. For many of them, *il mout* (death) seems to be something beyond them because as someone told me, one can die anytime, anywhere, even in bed. It is entirely *b'yidd rabbi* (in the hands of God).

V. The Detention Center

The migrants' ordeal does not end with the sea crossing; rather, they are distressed again by the dehumanizing policy of detention, which negatively impacts their psychological well-being. As I demonstrate in this section of this chapter, most informants who stayed at these detention facilities complained about the ill-treatment received from the *carabinieri* (Italian police), the non-hygienic

conditions of their confinement, and the conditions of overcrowding, the prevalence of disease, and a poor diet. Cuttitta describes this situation:

Italian detention centers operate as inwardly flexibilized, fixed and punctiform manifestations of the Italian border. Their official purpose is to enforce expulsion orders, to help authorities push back foreigners beyond the borderline: since the linear border has proved too weak and unstable, detention centers have been established in order to support and strengthen it. They can be regarded to as waiting rooms of the border, or as the points of extreme tension of a stretched rubber band that, when released, is supposed to project the detainees beyond the official demarcation line of the state border (Cuttitta 2014: 124).

Of his detention conditions, Rached, a 28-year old man and former Student Union activist from Sousse, had this to say:

For seven weeks, I slept on the cold floor with no mattress or covers. I contracted severe bronchitis and was denied any medical intervention simply because I was supposedly rebellious and often complained about everything. I was treated badly despite my illness and was insulted and humiliated on various occasions by the officers at the center. The Italians are very racist towards Tunisians. There is a lot of *hogra* (humiliation) in the center. They treat you like an animal. It is totally unhuman and degrading to see that migrants at the reception center are sprayed and disinfected while naked, like rats, without any respect to their human dignity [Big sigh...] (Interview 05/18/2014).

The above-mentioned interview excerpt offer evidence that the Tunisian migrants had appalling living conditions while in the *Contrada Imbriacola* Detention Center in Lampedusa, which had been built in 2007 for a total capacity of 800 migrants, but was now hosting up to 2,800 migrants. Most migrants like Rached, suffered humiliation and dehumanization while being detained. Many complained about being treated like dogs or being called “animals.” This dehumanization tactic, i.e., associating migrants with animals, causes victims psychological harm and, for some, a desire to take revenge and resort to violence.



Migrants in Lampedusa Centre. Photo: WHO Regional Office for Europe

Fig 11. Migrants in Lampedusa Center

Rached was not the only participant in the study to complain about the poor facilities and lack of access to medical services due to a rebellious nature and non-obedience. As one detainee told me, it was a way for the detention staff to punish migrants and teach them a lesson. Moreover, migrants are often victims of verbal and physical abuse by the *carabinieri*. Violence had been perpetrated against some detainees, leading to broken bones and other serious injuries.

Ahmed, 34, from Bouhajla, Kairouan, described the situation in this way:

“Since I arrived, I’ve spent two weeks without a single shower. The food they give us is inedible...I cannot even understand what it is and how it was prepared...White pasta every day! We are not sleeping properly and many of us have no place in the Center and are roaming the streets of Lampedusa in the cold weather...My friends, Salah and Ahmed, are sleeping in an abandoned building near the Center...Others sleep in the open fields near mountains of smelly garbage worse than Tunisia...Lampedusa is a big *habs* (prison).

We do not have access to any lawyer or anyone that can help...We have no status here...We are literally nothing. When they first came, they approached us with huge dogs like criminals...They even confiscated a number of cellphones in the possession of some fellow *harraga* (translation)...We have nowhere to go...They even prevented us from attending the funeral of our friends! Where are the human rights that they always talk about? This is not acceptable! If the situation does not change, we will follow Mohamed Bouazizi and immolate ourselves (07/10/2014).

Ahmed's testimony and those of other Tunisian refugees and migrants reveal the extreme mental and physical hardships they had to endure. In addition to physical violence, verbal abuse, and racial profiling by the Center's guards and staff, they also suffered from lack of hygiene, poor diet, overcrowding, and lack of access to lawyers or translators. As evidenced by the narratives, discipline and security at the Center seemed to be fully embodied and achieved through the arbitrary decisions and actions of the *carabinieri*, who abused the power they have to control and intimidate migrants. As such, detention emerges as a "normalized" technique of control (Bloch and Schuster 2005), in which detention centers become not only sites of punishment and discipline, but also of humiliation and dehumanization. To fight this, most Tunisian detainees threatened the use of "self-immolation." Many erroneously believe that this threat will ensure that their claims are taken seriously and Center staff and police will start to treat them with dignity and respect.

Not surprisingly, many of the study population were saddened and disappointed to realize that Italy was not the "paradise" they had expected. For example, Ahmed has decided to escape to France where his cousin will help him find a good job. He believes that France will grant him the chance to build a successful life and that he will regain the dignity and humanity taken from him by the Italians. Another migrant, Fethi, a 38-years-old Tunisian, was eloquent about his unhappiness with Italy:

I am very disappointed with Italy! I truly thought I would find a place where I could regain my lost dignity and realize a dream, but it is a mere illusion. The Italians are racist, insulting, arrogant, and unwelcoming to foreigners, especially to Muslims. They treat us like an enemy, like terrorists. Some have even thrown stones and rotten prickly pears at us while on the beach the other day. But we are harmless human beings who deserve respect and whose only obsession in life is to make a living and improve our situation. I took part in the Tunisian Revolution, and I decided to escape to Italy to be human, but I was mistaken because I feel less than an animal now. It is true that some people here in Lampedusa were nice to us and gave us biscuits, bread, water, cigarettes, telephone cards and shampoo. It is so kind of them, but we do not want their charity, we want freedom, *karama* (dignity), good jobs, and *lawraq* (papers) so that we can live here like true human beings (Interview 07/18/2014).

Fethi, like the majority of the Tunisian population of this study, aspired to values of *karama*, freedom, and enjoyment of human rights, which were lacking in Tunisia and for which a “revolution” broke out. The treatment migrants receiving in the Center robbed them of their dignity by putting them through humiliating experiences that further deepened their sense of alienation and dehumanization—all accentuated by the ill-treatment they received from the Italian police.

In addition to the psychological distress they suffer, migrants continue to face a number of physical risks such as injury, adverse health issues, and even death. For example, Bettino, a staff member at the Center, told me that tensions between Tunisians and Libyans were very frequent and violent, resulting in physical injuries for most detainees. An eyewitness described a serious fight to me that was provoked over a pack of cigarettes, which had been stolen from a Libyan detainee. The accused Tunisian migrant was badly beaten and fell on the hard floor, injuring his head, all the while under the watch of the Center’s staff who failed to offer any protection or help. Theft was a recurrent pattern and major source of tension among detainees. According to Bettino, Tunisians were always the ones who stole and were the most turbulent, ruthless, and merciless. They often insulted and provoked other detainees, creating many problems and engaging in violent behavior (Field notes 08/03/2014).



Lampedusa receiving centre. Photo: WHO Regional Office for Europe

Fig 12. Reception Center in Lampedusa

The ordeal of the sea crossing as well as the dehumanizing experience in the detention centers follows Tunisian migrants throughout their life in Sicily and haunts them for a long time. For example, Raouf, a 20-year-old young man who worked at a bakery, described his exhaustion to me:

You know, I am always tired and fatigued. This is truly the fate that *rabbi* (God) had in store for me. I am still haunted by the traumatic experience of my *harqa* and my experience at the *Centro*. They both follow me all the time, and no matter what I do to forget them, they manage to come to the surface. The images of the dead, floating bodies, and the smell of death...will be in my memory forever. These scars are deep and will probably follow me through all my life. I often feel down and anxious and lose sleep. I cannot even count my sleepless nights anymore. This is still occurring and I really do not know what to do, especially now that I have gotten this recent job at the bakery and have to wake up every day at four a.m.

Often, I cannot help it, but I feel sleepy at the bakery. My boss has noticed it on many occasions and threatened to get rid of me if I continue to be sleepy and lethargic. I drink the espresso after the espresso and excuse myself to the restroom to run water over my head so that I can keep my eyes open and do the job. I force myself to be talkative to my chatty co-workers at the bakery by responding to their jokes. I do this by putting on a daily mask to cover up my sadness and anxiety and all of those negative emotions and bad memories of the *Centro*. They are still here. They are still fresh... [Sigh...] (Interview 06/12/2014).

VI. Life Outside

Although many migrants had been relocated to other reception centers in Sicily, some were still in limbo on Lampedusa and moved freely around the island. When I walked around Lampedusa's main streets, I had the feeling that I was in an open-air prison where distressed migrants are trapped on an isolated island, totally detached from mainland Italy, with little or no opportunity to escape, except for those few who have money and the right connections. Mohamed, a 23-year old man, summed up this experience: "I wish I were dead. Lampedusa is a big jail. One cannot even breathe or think clearly about any prospects of escape."

i. Idleness: Repercussions

During the day, migrants could be seen wandering around, sipping coffee, smoking at local cafés, playing soccer on the beach, or sitting on public benches watching people. Some had even cynically created a banner with words *Grazie Lampedusa* (Thank you, Lampedusa), marching with it throughout the island. Under these circumstances, the local population in Lampedusa started complaining about the chaotic and violent situation on the island, and many Lampedusans claimed that they were extremely concerned about the state of the tourism industry. They demanded that local authorities lock the migrants in centers and prisons so that they were out of sight and no longer visible (Field notes 07/12/2014). Marisa, a retired teacher from Lampedusa, told me:

We, Lampedusans, are extremely afraid and stressed even to leave the house to run regular errands. We have been locked in our homes because of these terrible and massive North African invasions. Our government is not doing anything to halt the arrival of these migrants, who are only bringing chaos and terrorism to our country (Interview 07/25/2014).

Marisa clearly had a hostile attitude, which was, and is, shared by a number of local Lampedusans, and her testimony demonstrates the high level of fear and anxiety that came with the so-called "invasion" of Tunisian migrants. This narrative of invasion contributes to an essentialist representation of this migrant population, reinforcing a rhetoric of exclusion and xenophobia that has spread beyond Lampedusa to the

rest of Italy. Moreover, most migrants in this study did not speak Italian, making contact with locals difficult if not impossible. Socializing and acts of friendships were hard to establish because the migrants were rejected in the first place and perceived as “potential terrorists” and “invaders” who had come to propagate chaos, disorder and crime. The boundaries were already established, and migrants had no choice but to intermingle among themselves, thereby widening the gap that separates them from the local population and contributing to further their misrepresentation and miscommunication. As one participant told me, “How can they accept us when we hardly talk to them or even get close to their space. They look at us as if we come from a different planet. Their eyes are full of fear and hostility” (Interview 06/25/2014).

This psychological distance between the migrants and the locals was a constant reminder to both groups of the migrants’ exclusion, difference, and state of being “Others.” Interestingly, some Italian activists started a riots and demonstration of solidarity with Tunisian migrants, denouncing the hostile reactions of the government, the media, and the larger Italian public. The protesters held slogans and placards including “Pace,” (peace) “Migrants rights are human rights,” “Respect for refugees,” and “FRONTEX is Criminal.” During the riot, migrants of different nationalities joined the activists, and the protests took on an atmosphere of celebration with music and dancing. Local residents, staff, and volunteers offered food and drinks from some local and regional NGOs, such as Askavusa, that worked with migrants. A group of young Lampedusans tried to disrupt the demonstration, but the police made sure that there was no violence (Field notes 07/10/2014).

ii. Job-Hunting

A number of Tunisians I encountered in Lampedusa and Palermo received expulsion orders after their asylum applications were rejected on the basis that they were economic migrants. However, most did not leave Italy but remained “illegally” in Italy. Also, after an agreement with the Tunisian government in April 2011, Italy granted some temporary six-month visas. The visa renewal depended on whether these

migrants could find jobs; otherwise, the terms of the agreement stipulated they would be subject to immediate deportation. Some obtained seasonal, agricultural jobs such as in the tomato and watermelon fields in parts of Sicily, such as Ragusa and Trapani. Some migrants engaged in very low-income jobs such as car-washer or parking guard while others took up criminal activities such as car theft or mugging. A few managed to cross the border and make it successfully to France, a country where they had family and social networks. Yet, few were arrested by the French authorities and deported to Tunisia.

Empty plastic bottles, packs of cigarettes, and litter surrounded the six migrants who came for an interview in a local Palermitan café behind the famous *Teatro Massimo* (Massimo Theatre). Mohsen, a 23-year-old man, was the first to speak:

I escaped the Center, slept on the beach for four days, and went all over Lampedusa, looking for a job and a place to stay. Then I managed to get the price of a ticket and took the ferry to Palermo. I stayed there for four days, and then moved to Agrigento, Trapani, even Mazara Del Vallo. I could not find anything. I came back to Palermo because I can live here rent-free, thanks to my friend Aziz. Many people told me Italians do not hire Tunisians anymore. We Tunisians, especially those who came after the revolution, seem to have a very bad reputation in Italy. This does not mean that I will give up. I will continue looking (Interview 25/04/2014).

Many Tunisians in Palermo, like Mohsen, congregated every day early in the morning in front of Alfredo Café, hoping to be hired as tomato, watermelon, or grapes pickers—but in vain. For many Tunisians, finding a job became an impossible mission. Hilmi, a very thin man in his thirties, said “You ask your friends and the friends of your friends, and all you hear is *Inchallah* (God’s willing).” The men told me that Italians preferred to hire West-Africans and Bangladeshis. They had a much better reputation and were known to be docile, hard workers who were often satisfied by a few Euros in payment. As many of my respondents, these interviewees commented that the Italians were not interested to hire them and were treating them differently than migrants from other countries. Many had concluded that their negative image was related to the fact that they were Arabs and Muslim.

Hilmi’s story served as an exemplar of hit-and-miss job-hunting:

Luckily, I got a small job on a farm outside Palermo picking watermelons. I worked there for 2 weeks, but the Capo only paid me 150 Euros. I should have been paid 450 Euros instead. The Capo told me that that is all he could pay me and that I can report him to the police if I wanted. I tried nicely to negotiate with him and to get him to pay me the difference, but it did not work. I gave up and told myself that only God could help me out. You know, stories like that happen every day (10/02/2014).

Being jobless, Hilmi joined a group of Tunisians in *Mondello*, a popular Palermitan resort, and started to engage in illicit activities such as selling hashish late at night on the beach. He said that Italians push you to engage in risky activities because they do not want to hire you in regular and clean jobs.

I had no other option because the legal route is closed, and I have to survive and pay my share of rent; otherwise, I will find myself on the street again. You have to see how I live. We live in a one-bedroom apartment, six of us sleeping together on worn-out mattresses eating pasta every day. Sometimes, when we run out of food, we secretly go to Caritas to get some bread, milk, and cans of tuna for free. We are so grateful that those places exist and thank Allah for all the help they provide, especially food and clothing. But we do not want to go there often because we prefer not to be seen by other Tunisians, because it is disgraceful, you know. What I am talking about? This is not a life. I wish to be back home. I miss the comfort of my bed and the food of my mom. I am always thinking about leaving Palermo and going back to Tunisia, but it is a hard decision. I do not want to return empty-handed. That would be a big shame (10/02/2014).

Old Palermo, to which I moved during the second part of my stay in August 2014, hosts a large number of irregular migrant communities, including Roma, Bangladeshi, Tunisians, Moroccans, Egyptians, Ghanians, Nigerians, Malians, and Eritreans. Being irregulars and confronted with almost non-existent income options to make ends meet, many were engaged in illicit activities such as selling hash and other drugs at street corners in the open market and narrow streets of Ballaro. I met Aladdine, a 28-year old man in *Centro Astralli* Palermo, a charity organization that supports undocumented migrants. He frequented the Centro to play baby foot and video games, take a hot shower and grab food donations such as used clothes, milk, crackers and canned-tuna. Despite his various hardships, Aladdine managed to get some money by selling hash to locals. He admitted that he used to do it while in Hay Hlel in Tunisia and that was why he was good at it. Yet, because of the competition with the West African migrants, Aladdine did not make

enough money. However, he was comfortable with his hard life as he felt a sense of belonging in this Sicilian city. “We feel at home here. It is like a small piece of Tunisia,” Aladdine commented.

It is important to mention that not all migrants remained jobless and idle, roaming the streets of Sicily engaging in illicit employment activities. A few migrants were more entrepreneurial and managed to get small jobs without a *permesso di soggiorno* and seemed to be successfully integrating into the Sicilian society. Chaker was one of these; he had come to Palermo two years earlier and was still waiting for his *permesso*:

When you have been here for almost two years and have no papers, it becomes a real burden and a source of frustration. To fully function in Italy, everyone needs a *permesso*. When I arrived to Palermo, there were only a few Tunisians here. Now, they are everywhere. It truly feels like I am back home again. Wherever you go, they are in your face.

Palermo is *zaboura*¹⁹ (very beautiful). The good thing about being in Palermo is that one can easily get a *lavoro in nero* (job in the black market) without documents. I now work at a car wash and barely make enough money to make ends meet. But, when you do your job properly and smile and be nice to clients, they often give you generous tips. The Palermitans have big hearts, unlike Napolitans, who exploit you and never pay you enough. Sometimes, I secretly get clients’ phone numbers and do home service over the weekend for much less money than what they normally pay at the wash station. I actually do not want to overdo this because I don’t want to get caught by my boss and lose my job. I only do it for certain clients who are trustworthy and discreet.

Also, in Palermo, if you are short on money and need basic food, you can go to Caritas, and they will feed you and even give you used clothes and shoes to wear. In Palermo, one can also have access to cheap rent and small jobs. Unlike the rest of Italy where living costs are much higher and papers are often required for any type of job (Field notes 09/05/2014).

iii. Male-male Prostitution

When I was conducting interviews in Ballaro, Mohamed, a 24-year-old man, insisted that I stop by his studio for a beer. The studio was large and smelled of stale tobacco. Mohamed said that four people shared the studio and each paid 50 Euros a month. The large room was divided into small sleeping areas, cleverly separated by pieces of wood, mattresses, and blankets, thereby creating an atmosphere of privacy. On the walls, pictures of Italian soccer players and semi-naked women, probably Italian movie

¹⁹ An obscene word used in the Tunisian vernacular to refer to something as very beautiful.

stars, were carefully taped. Some frameless pictures, most likely of family and loves-ones, had been put on what looked like a dining table. On the same table, various objects were scattered around, such as food packaging, a small Quran, empty cigarettes' packs with cigarette butts, old dirty kitchen cloths, empty water bottles, used phone-cards, and an over-used toothbrush. Mohamed apologized for the messiness of the place, lit a cigarette, and offered me a bottle of chilled *Peroni* (local beer). We started chatting about various things and suddenly touched on the topic of sex. As we were talking, Mohamed told me that a few Tunisians he knew well engaged in sexual activities with Italian men for money. He said that these Tunisians—he never mentioned the names—frequented the park near the port or strolled on the beach after sunset to engage in male prostitution with local gay men and tourists. Although I tried to get in touch with some of these men through Mohamed and his friend Majdi, all my attempts failed. This did not surprise me because homosexuality is a very delicate subject for Tunisians, especially those coming from a lower socio-economic class such as the study population. Hence, the stories I heard about male prostitution were not told to me by actual prostitutes; rather, they were cautiously reported by friends, such as Mohamed, who approached the topic with a lot of stress, discomfort, and fear and asked me to keep the information secret. Majdi, a 24-year-old fruit vendor at Ballaro, joined my conversation with Mohamed, saying,

We all know what is going on and who exactly is doing it. You know Palermo is small, and people talk a lot and gossip about one another especially *ahna ettwansa* (We the Tunisians). But, you know, this is *haram* (a sin), very bad and totally unacceptable in our religion or by our society. As they say in Tunisia, “*thkar maa thkar thrab rabbi bil hjar*” (Men doing it with men is like throwing stones at Allah). No matter how poor you are, you cannot resort to *ettfara* (active homosexuality). It always remains *haram* and *ya wiilou il wahid nhar akhor and rabbi* (one would be severely punished by God on judgment day). And by the way, one can always catch AIDS and return to Tunisia in a coffin, like a couple Tunisians that we know about (interview 10/23/2014).

This prolonged narrative about male-male prostitution revealed the complex situation in which a number of migrants found themselves: having no resources or options for survival except to sell their

bodies. Thus, they secretly engaged in and *haram* activities, as described by Majdi, in order to survive their migration experience.

VII. Conclusion

In this chapter, I used ethnographic and interview data to describe the experiences of most Tunisian migrants who managed to land in Lampedusa. I captured the multitude of human rights abuses that they underwent as they went through four specific stages in their journey: pre-departure, sea crossing, detention, and life in the Italian society. I demonstrated that smuggling migrants from Tunisia to Lampedusa is a full-fledged industry that is highly manipulative and dangerous. The majority of individuals taking this journey are prime candidates for exploitation, ill-treatment, and abuse from the start of their journey to its end on Lampedusa and later in Sicily. Nor does the cruelty stop when the migrants land in “paradise.” Instead, it starts when they are rescued and transferred to detention centers or let loose on the streets where they face racial discrimination, humiliation, and “Otherization.” I used migrants’ narratives to depict the types of hardships, dangers, violence, and suffering that they are exposed to in Lampedusa and Sicily. These narratives show that the migrants’ lives are filled with pain, suffering, and hardship; some even regret leaving Tunisia. Detention, in particular, negatively affects their physical and mental well-being, and detention personnel erode their sense of being human until they feel more like “animals” without self-respect and “*karama*” (dignity). Those who live on the margins of the Italian society are in a state of liminality, leading “shadowed lives” (Chavez 1991) that makes their access to resources extremely difficult. While a few migrants are able to surmount these dehumanizing experiences, others feel that they have been totally destroyed.

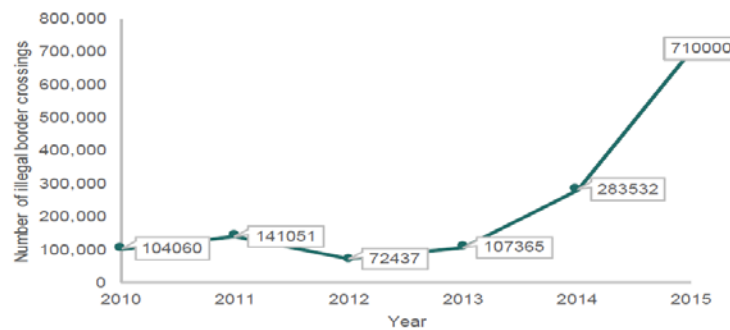
CHAPTER SIX

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE MIGRANT: “ILLEGAL” AND “CRIMINAL”

I. Introduction

The current European debate about migration is characterized by constructing the irregular migrant, such as the Tunisian migrant of this study, as a subject of risk, i.e., the new “security threat” to Europe. Under this social construction, the migrant’s social image is no longer simply that of “otherness,” but that of being in an ongoing and/or potential state of “illegality” and “criminality.” The more the debate goes on, the more this social construction of the migrant is strengthened, resulting in higher levels of anti-migrant, discriminatory, and xenophobic sentiments. Italy, in particular, has had an eruption of anti-migration sentiment that has normalized deeply negative stereotypes about the *clandestini* (irregulars), thus making their “demonization” a mainstream practice. The fear of the Muslim “Other” has become so ingrained in the Italian public imaginary that the socio-economic fabric and overall political landscape, particularly in the southern part of Italy, is increasingly hostile to all Muslim migrants, whether regular or irregular. Territorial exclusion of these unwanted migrants has become the rationale for the deportation of thousands of refugees and irregular migrants in the aftermath of the North African popular uprisings. New restrictive migration policies are continuously being implemented in Italy and Europe as well to deter migration and to control the northern Mediterranean border in a more effective way for the purpose of “securitization.”

Figure 4: Total number of detected irregular border crossings



Source: Frontex (2015a, p. 12 PS-6) – note: data recorded up until October 2015

Fig 13. Total Number of Detected Irregular Border Crossings

As well, a number of procedures have been implemented to criminalize irregular migrants which include, but are not limited to, the enactment of laws that sanction migrants in an “illegal” situation and the people who provide them with any form of assistance. These laws include unlawful detention and deportations without procedural guarantees. Indeed, criminalization has now become the strategy for dealing with irregular migration. Italy, along with many other European states, is now exercising its alleged right to close and control its maritime borders not only by establishing restrictions to legal entrance, but also by enacting and enforcing anti-criminal norms against anyone violating these restrictions.

The following chapter is organized into two halves. In the first half, I examine the context in which the “criminalizing” content of the Italian deportation policies and reactions towards the “illegal” human flows take place. I provide a critical analysis of the social construction of the Tunisian migrant as the “Other” or potential “criminal” by exploring the effects of migration policies implemented by Italian authorities. In doing so, I attempt to tease out the ambivalent and arbitrary bureaucratic procedures that identify the political asylum seeker, regular or irregular, as he or she transits among different juridical statuses. In other words, I center my attention on the contentious and dynamic nature of migrant categories, i.e. “asylum seeker” or “irregular migrant,”

to demonstrate how these categories are blurred by laws and policies, how they have socially constructed the Tunisian migrant into a “criminal,” and how they impact the everyday life of the migrants in this study. In the second half of the chapter, I focus on the contentious concept of Islamophobia. I first provide a short overview of this phenomenon by contextualizing it within the literature of anthropological theory and migration. I then examine the “racialization” of Muslim migrants and how this process has been used in Italy to normalize xenophobic attitudes and exacerbate anti-Muslim rhetoric. Throughout my analysis, I use narratives of the study participants to capture the way they give meanings to their experiences of “Otherization,” “criminalization,” and Islamophobia.

II. Deportation and the Process of Criminalization

In Chapter 2, I demonstrated how the Italian government sanctioned deportation, which contravened international law. In this chapter, I describe how the “criminalization” of migrants made deportation more palatable and thus more justifiable to the Italian government and populace.

i. The Irregular Migrant

I live near the central station of Via Roma, which is a pick-up point for Italians looking for day laborers. The area is often patrolled by the Palermitan police and known to be a drug-dealing spot for some locals. Every day, before leaving the house, I recite a *sura* (verse) from the Quran, as I have no idea what will happen to me. I live in permanent fear of being arrested or deported. The police here are wild. They are worse than Tunisian police and can arrest you and deport you for no reason. You always feel like a *mujrim* (criminal). This is not a life. *Ya rabbi nakhou il permesso* (God, I get my *permesso*) and all this will become history [sigh...] (06/02/2014).

This testimony by Wael, a 22-year-old young man who had been living in Palermo for three months, not only demonstrates the existential issues of living as “illegal,” but also shows how the *Bossi-Fini* law complicates the lives of irregular migrants by making their clandestine status a

criminal offence. This status also applies to migrants who were not “illegal,” but have failed to renew their permits of residence or can no longer find regular jobs or accommodation. Many of these migrants, like Wael, live in a state of permanent fear and anxiety while they wait for an unlikely amnesty in order to get themselves regularized and obtain their *permessos*. Naim, a 25-year old man, stated:

“You know, the presence of *clandestini* in this country is essential. Italy needs us and that is why they often do those amnesties – *mouch ala swad iniina*²⁰ (not because they like us). *Inchallah*, they will be doing a new amnesty soon. This is what I heard from good sources” (Interview 08/16/2014).

Before the Tunisian migrants were constructed as “criminals,” they were viewed as “problems” that needed fixing. This perception began soon after the massive landings of Tunisians on Lampedusa. Prime Minister Berlusconi visited the island and announced, “The evacuation has begun. It will take two, two-and-a-half days. From then on, Lampedusa will return to Lampedusans” (Poggioli: 2011). On February 20, 2011, Frontex reinforced its monitoring of the Sicilian channel. In March 2011, Roberto Maroni, Minister of the Interior, said that the flows of migrants from Tunisia and Libya would bring Italy “to its knees.” In March 2011, Franco Frattini, Minister of Foreign Affairs, talked of 200,000 to 300,000 arrivals, creating a future that was “impossible to imagine” (Fargues 2012:26).

Italy then started a collective detention and expulsion of most of these migrants, implementing border-control measures to facilitate sending boatloads and charter flights of “irregular” migrants back to Tunisia and Libya. These measures are strategies of exclusion that become entrenched within national and international policy frameworks aiming at more effective management of migrants’ mobility (Fekete 2005). One such mechanism is not to screen migrants first for potential asylum claims; another is deportation. This latter practice has “achieved an

²⁰ This expression literally means “not for the blackness of our eyes.”

unprecedented prominence [...and] seems to have become a virtually global regime” (De Genova 2002: 34). Gibney states, “deportation not only constitutes the most explicit form of exclusion, but also ‘the state’s ultimate and most naked form of immigration control’” (Gibney 2003: 1).

ii. The Asylum Seeker

Many migrants in this study applied for an asylum status after arriving on Lampedusa, claiming that they were fleeing dangers in Tunisia where armed gangs and snipers filled the streets and telling Italian authorities that they would return to Tunisia as soon as the country gets stable. For the majority, however, their ultimate goal is to move on to France, where they can speak the language and have extended social networks of family and friends.

The legal concept of asylum seeker is different from that of the irregular migrant. The asylum seeker claims to be fleeing from persecution and, therefore, eligible for international protection, according to the principles stated by the 1951 Geneva Convention. The local bureaucratic practices in Italy are remarkably lengthy and arbitrary so it can take several months for an asylum application to enter the system and hence be registered by the police authorities. In the meantime, the asylum applicant is entitled to hold a temporary residency permit, which gives the holder the right to work, while his or her claim is being examined—a process that can take more than a year.

Thus the asylum seeker, just like the irregular migrant, is in a state of limbo under a “formally” irregular condition. Cabot writes, “limbo is implied in the juridical formulation of asylum seeking itself. Asylum applicants occupy a position precariously in-between undocumented, paperless illegality and “refugee status” (Cabot 2012: 16). The arbitrariness and indeterminacies of the bureaucratic procedures for asylum seekers demonstrate that Italian immigration laws construct illegality and criminalization producing new forms of “illegitimate illegality” (Calavita 2005, De

Genova 2002). This “illegality,” into which migrants constantly risk being submerged, is not only actively produced, but also patterned by the historical specificity of immigration laws (De Genova 2002).

The current border controls and surveillance mechanisms in Italy and Europe are so exclusionary that they leave little or no chance for those seeking asylum to enter through regular and legal channels. Also, the huge number of migrants, barriers of logistics, and language and bureaucratic arbitrariness make it hard for many to even consider pursuing their asylum claims. As a result, many decide that the only path that remains is to venture an “illegal” entry, often with the help of professional smugglers and thus often facing the dangers and violence that this type of voyage entails. Like irregular migrants, asylum seekers are also referred to as *clandestini*. They are believed to be trying to strategically infiltrate the country to take advantage of a collapsing welfare state and are similarly objects of the processes of dehumanization and criminalization of migrants in general (Pellizzari 2013).

Mounir, a 21-year-old young man, whom I interviewed in Agrigento in July 2014, is an irregular migrant and described what it was like to have one’s asylum application denied, be a *clandestino* and navigate the “spaces of nonexistence” (Coutin 2003):

Life as a *clandestino* is like living underground. You are on your own avoiding people and hiding most of the time. *Lazimni n’warrq* (I must have papers) ... You have no name, no identity, no home... You are afraid of everybody because they can report you to the *carabinieri* any time and any moment. The result is that you can be deported in a wink of an eye... Even though; you know that you have done nothing wrong, but you still feel guilty and shameful... It is as if you have killed a whole bunch of people. (Interview 07/10/2014).

For asylum seekers, the bureaucratic procedures that they must go through deeply affect their integrity as they are stripped of their identities, and their individuality is reduced to the abstraction of simple file numbers/references. For example, Nadhem, a 33-year old man who seemed to be much

older than his age, told me that he was forced to sign papers that he could not even read or understand, as there was neither translation available nor any kind of assistance or explanation. After the interview, the only thing he had was a reference number. Many, like Nadhem, find themselves exposed to complicated procedures and classifications without adequate knowledge—an experience that reinforces their feelings of confusion, disorientation, uncertainty, and anxiety. Nadhem was also concerned that he had given wrong answers that could compromise his application and make his asylum project impossible to realize.

As I noted above, the two statuses, irregular and asylum seeker, are also conflated and blurred because most Tunisians landing in Lampedusa applied for asylum, but the majority were rejected. They were classified as “irregulars” because authorities had given them the designation of “economic migrants” as opposed to “political refugees.” For example, Saber, a 30-year old man, applied for political asylum and found himself caught in an ambiguous process with an interminable process of waiting:

We did not have access to any lawyer or anyone that could help... We have no status here... we do not speak the language and we do not know what to do... We are literally nothing... When they first came; they approached us with huge dogs like criminals... They even confiscated a number of cellphones in the possession of some fellow *harraga* (translation)... All we do is wait... wait and wait... We are mentally and physically exhausted. This is unfair and it cannot continue (Interview 06/15/2014).

Saber’s words vividly highlight the conditions under which a number of migrants find themselves. Many feel that they are being penalized for a crime that they have never committed; many condemn the humiliating and dehumanizing behavior of the *carabinieri* (police). They are subject to exploitative treatment that takes place during migration control operations, within the reception centers, and/or during the asylum procedures. Ahmed concluded that this inhumane treatment should stop not only because he felt like a criminal, but also because it came on top of a disturbing sea crossing experience, and he and his fellow travelers were exhausted. This

dehumanization experience depicts the construction of migrants' subjectivities into what Dal Lago (2009) calls "non-persons" i.e., immigrants seen as having no social or personal history who are reduced to administrative categories and to being sub-human.

III. Local Media: Populist Rhetoric

The "migration crisis" of 2015 inundated world media with shocking images of desperate migrants and refugees fleeing the turmoil in the MENA region. The Italian media discourse on this crisis contained discriminatory and extremely pejorative labels such as "invasion," "attack," "terrorist threat," and "moral panic." This rhetoric has contributed to a large-scale phobia of Muslims migrants in the Italian population—a condition that has severely damaged the image of most Muslim diasporic communities in Italy, including the population of this study. This is evidenced by the current explosion of media-saturated talks, television programs, social media, documentaries, and blogs about Islam in Italy, which have, in many cases, produced and reinforced a neo-Orientalist perspective on the "Muslim world." This perspective has reduced the rich histories of the Middle East and the Arab-Muslim world, in particular, to a limited discourse that foregrounds gender oppression, religious fundamentalism, and violence. This discourse is sensationalist in character, appealing to the masses and establishing certain "truth" about the so-called "threat" of Muslim migration through political speeches, expert opinions, security analyses, and media reports (Tsoukala 2005). Although these over-mediatized and reiterated expressions and images are seemingly designed to inform the public, what they have done, and continue to do, is instill a tremendous public fear of the Tunisian "Other," the *extracomunitario* (foreign national), the *musulmano* (Muslim) who comes to bring "panic," "crisis," "disorder," "disease," and "crime" into Italy. Sciortino and Colombo claim that there has been a reduced use of the term *extracomunitario* since the beginning of the 1990s, as it became increasingly less necessary to specify these

immigrants as such, and “nationality became rather the focus of these alternative nomenclatures” (2004:107). Therefore, a number of more stigmatizing ethno-national terms *albanese*, *islamico*, *marocchino*, *musulmano*, *rumeno* (Albanian, Islamic, Moroccan, Muslim, Romanian) are now used more commonly in the Italian media and everyday vernacular.

Moreover, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are other spaces where Islamophobic information can be found. Najah, a 27-year old man said:

When I browse Facebook pages, especially the Italian ones, all I see is that they are sharing horrible and disgusting videos about ISIS and Al Qaida. This, of course, will spread confusion and make everyone believe that Islam is a satanic, bloody, and terrorist religion. The result will be widespread hatred and an inclination to remove all Muslim migrants from Italy and Europe including the Tunisians” (Interview 06/24/2014).

Thus social media present Tunisian migrants as an imminent Muslim threat to the safety, as well as the cultural and national identity, of the Italian state. Therefore, protecting the border from this external threat is seen as the primary concern of the state, which employs a number of measures and administrative regulations putting various criminal sanctions on irregular entry and presence.

Commonly watched Italian TV channels, such as TG4 and RAI, do not hesitate to use sensational and derogatory metaphors about MENA migration, such as airing the following infamous expression used by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi who told a TV news reporter that a “human tsunami of a total of 25,867 irregular migrants and asylum seekers landed in Lampedusa.” This type of discriminatory expression as well as the over-emphasizing and/or inflating the numbers of migrants can only heighten further anti-migration feelings. As Koser says, “the presentation of undeniably significant numbers runs the risk of fueling further public and media overreactions to the phenomenon” (Koser, 2005: 8). Media coverage thus centers on “visibility” and “illegality” labels, which are constantly over-dramatized by a number of Italian national TV channels and newspapers highlighting the “border spectacle” (De Genova 2002). De Haas states that the “increasing visibility of

global migration for the resident populations of Western societies might partly explain the popular perception that current migration is at unprecedented levels and the concomitant ‘flooding’ images associated with migration” (De Haas, 2005: 1270). These stigmatizing images and derogatory expressions feed into the popular perception of irregular migration as a “territorial invasion,” engendering more widespread stereotypes vis-à-vis post-uprising Tunisian migrants. Indeed, “it is precisely ‘the Border’ that provides the perfect theatre for staging the spectacle of the ‘illegal alien’ that the law produces” (De Genova 2002: 436).

Since mid-February 2011, the official reaction in Italy to this migration crisis has been pejorative and ruthless. The words and images used by Berlusconi and a number of Italian ministers have been highly charged and derogatory, creating a xenophobia that has been enthusiastically taken over by the media. According to D’Emilio (2011), a newspaper reported that “Italy ferried hundreds of Tunisians off the Sicilian island, Lampedusa, Saturday to detention centers amid government fears that terrorists could mix in among the boatloads of people fleeing turmoil in North Africa.” Louay, a frustrated 29-year-old Tunisian man, told me:

The images and words used to describe Muslim migrants in Italy are extremely derogatory. Whenever there is a debate or a program on migration in this country, it is often framed around our criminal tendencies, savage and criminal behavior, terrorist actions, and abuse of the system. There was once a program on RAI Uno where we were literally referred to as the “sons of Bin Laden” (Interview 05/09/2014).

The Italian media’s willingness to put migrants at the forefront of the news and over-emphasize their committed crimes demonstrates that the criminalization of migrants has clearly been drawn from a fascist and nationalist ideology.

IV. The Migration Security Debate: The Populist Agenda

Current migration policies are increasingly framed as a security issue in Italy, within the EU, and in the entire Schengen area. The concept of “security” is socially constructed and thus has multiple definitions and manifold ways of application. Terms such as “national security,” “human security,” and “public security” are highly contested and blurred by prevailing ideological discourses that link the political control of borders with migration policies, terrorism, and national sovereignty. The widespread xenophobic agenda put forth by growing populist forces and right-wing parties has reinforced the connection between “insecurity” and migration, especially that of the Tunisian individuals entering Italy after 2011. Sigona states that “security seems to be a ‘nebula concept’ with mobile borders, a crucible of meanings, expression of priorities, interests and expectations in a continuous interaction, which is, at the end, oriented by the dominating political discourse” (Sigona 2007). Moreover, what scholars and policy makers view as “national security” issues vary over time, according to the socio-economic and the political climate in place (Stivachtis 2008:1). According to Altheide, “resourceful leaders use the propaganda of fear to connect one problem with another, as in numerous news reports that join the ‘war on terrorism’ with ‘protecting our borders’ and stopping the ‘invasion.’ Under this fear propaganda, the process becomes one of moral panic as emotions run high and people assert that a ‘way of life’ is in jeopardy” (Altheide 2006:28). The following narrative told to me by Marisa, a retired, Lampedusan, elementary school teacher in her 50s, validates this:

They were two bearded Tunisian men who were very agitated, running in the street very late at night, chanting *Allahu Akbar* and other incomprehensible phrases in Arabic. Both men jumped over the fence of my garden, stole the water hose, picked some grapes, and ran away. I am panicking, and I hardly leave the house unless there is something urgent, and I prefer to do that in the company of someone and not by myself. It is a shame that you do not feel safe in your own home and that the government is not doing anything to deport these terrorists and criminals back to their countries. Also, I cannot understand why we have to shelter these people, feed them, give them clothes,

and even allow them to permanently live in Italy simply because they claim to be political refugees. This is very ironic; yet it is the reality. I really do not get it (Interview 07/14).

A moral panic such as the one experienced by Marisa occurs, according to Cohen, when “a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media and politicians” (Cohen 1972:9). The construction of migrants as a “dangerous threat” not only contributes to their further “demonization,” but also to the undermining of their humanity and sense of self and paving the way for the implementation of more severe, exclusionary policies towards them. These policies reinforce the boundaries between the host society and the migrant community by placing “physical fences” around their movements, while emphasizing various images of criminality and disorder. Due to the fact that he does not belong, the “illegal” migrant is therefore constructed not only symbolically, but also juridically. This criminalized condition paves the way for a state of delinquency that “authorizes the perpetual surveillance and control of the immigrant population” (Behdad 1998:105).

To reconcile “national security” with “human security” in relationship to migration is far from being an easy task. As Koser states, “irregular migration poses very real dilemmas for states exposing migrants themselves to insecurity and vulnerability (Koser 2005:13). These security measures and practices reflect a global logic called the “externalization” of migratory control (Guiraudon and Joppke 2001). A trend that can be traced back to the 1990s as Western countries began developing new strategies for the containment of migratory flows (Guiraudon and Joppke 2001:13). Technologically sophisticated surveillance apparatus are continuously being added, along with fences and walls, as a means to guard this divide (Cornelius et al. 2004). These new forms of policing, i.e., at a distance, as Bigo and Guild (2005:1) have noted, “moves the locus of the controls

and delocalizes them from the borders of the states [...].” Most states have, nevertheless, failed to manage or control irregular migration effectively or efficiently. These security measures do not hold back illegal migration attempts; instead, they only move the flow of migrants away from popular crossing points to more rough and dangerous terrains (Massey, Durand, & Malone 2002, Cornelius et al. 2004).

Notably, the populist discourse uses the “security card” to “criminalize” irregular migration, presenting it as a national security problem that can only be resolved through the tightening and policing of the borders. This link between migration and criminality remains a very complex issue as it often gets politicized and mediatized according to periods, phases, geographical locations, ethnic groups, criminal networks, and so on. Only a comprehensive anthropological and multi-dimensional approach that takes this complexity into account can offer suitable social and political analyses—an approach that is beyond the scope of this dissertation

From a conservative political point of view, defining foreigners as a source of multiple social problems would ultimately provide a plausible justification for strict migration policies. It follows that fearing a loss of sovereignty due to Europeanization and globalization, political elites seek to reassure their electorate by placing the protection of borders and other issues related to national security high on their political agendas. According to Brinkley,

The history of civil liberties in times of emergency suggests that governments seldom react to crises carefully or judiciously. They acquiesce to the most alarmist proponents of repression. They pursue preexisting agendas in the name of national security. They target unpopular or vulnerable groups in the population less because there is clear evidence of danger than because there is little political cost” (Brinkley 2003: 45- 46).

A UNHCR staff member, whom I met in a bar in Agrigento, provided insights into the issue:

One has to also be aware of the fact that these migrants, like any other irregular migrants, have no access to jobs and have to eat in order to survive. The only way for them to do so is by stealing. It seems that the car theft incidents have increased exponentially in Agrigento and, according to the local police, the main culprits are Tunisians. Also, it seems that there are many instances of shoplifting happening in various grocery stores and supermarkets, mainly for food items. These migrants have to eat and that is somehow understandable. As a UNHCR person, I always try to direct them to Caritas and other NGOs where food is freely distributed to migrants so that no one remains hungry or resort to stealing.

It is sad that a large number of these migrants are now filling up Sicilian prisons and some have even been illegally deported, even for crimes that they have never committed. Unfortunately, the news about crime and theft travel extremely fast and spread amongst the locals, sometimes with many exaggerations and twistedness. The problem is when they get used by politicians to serve their political agenda and win elections” (Interview 07/13/2014).

As the narrative demonstrates, when social anxiety propagates, host societies generally do not criticize their own policies, but put the blame, if they can, on the “Others,” i.e., those who visibly contribute to a decline in the overall quality of life as shown by factors such as increased unemployment, crime, disorder, and their engendered socio-economic problems. In an interesting discussion of the importance of “human security” in the context of contemporary irregular migration, a 1994 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report stated:

For too long, the concept of security has been shaped by the potential for conflict between states. For too long, security has been equated with the threats to a country’s borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. The world can never be at peace unless people have security in their daily lives. Future conflicts may often be within nations rather than between them. Human security is not a concern with weapons—it is a concern with human lives and dignity (UNDP 1994).

With the “securitization” of the migration debate, existing borders are tightening in an unprecedented way and new discriminatory borders are being created for certain groups of immigrants and refugees, especially those coming from Muslim countries. Silverstein contends that the perception of Muslim migrants as a “threatening existence” still persists in a number of

European societies feeding in “national fantasies” depicting the Muslim migrant population as “nationally suspect and potentially disloyal” (Silverstein 2005). The recent influx of migrants with highly differentiated cultural and religious traits, such as those of Muslims, have become popular and dominant themes in the representation of migration both in public and political discourse.

The prevailing discourse in Europe today has taken a new turn by linking Islam with violence and anti-Western values (Triandafyllidou; Modood and Zapata-Barrero, 2006). The Italian migration agenda, for instance, became exclusively framed within the recent terrorist attacks taking place in a number of European cities such as Paris, Brussels, and Nice. Racist outbreaks, both verbal and physical, from Italian authorities, the larger public, and media have become mainstream, targeting a number of Muslim migrants including Tunisians. Moreover, the increasing violence in the MENA region, primarily propagated by ISIS terrorist groups, has engendered unprecedented waves of anxiety and Islamophobia in Italy and across Europe. Due to this climate of fear and increasing suspicion of Muslims, the participants in this study have become subject to an increasing “racialization,” experiencing various incidences of Islamophobia. In Italy, for example, xenophobic debates about migration refer to Muslim migrants by using derogatory religious terminology rather than an ethno-cultural jargon. One local resident in Agrigento explicitly expressed her anxiety and fear of *Marrochini* (Tunisian migrants) stating, “these Muslims are parasites who invade our land to literally suck our blood.” When describing the Muslim migrant community in Palermo, Roberto, a local 48-year-old man, referred to them as “evil,” “parasites,” and “camels.” He said “those parasites use our system, steal our jobs, or get welfare money.” This xenophobia extends into the elite. For example, the Italian political scientist Satori claims that Muslim migrants are a separate category, an “invasive” presence that will bring “disorder and desegregation” (Sartori, G. 2002). The term “invasive” suggests that Italy has been over-run by Muslims. However, this perception is

belied by recent statistics from the Italian Ministry of Interior, which estimated that the Muslim population in Italy increased to 1,613,000 million, representing only *2.7 per cent* (my italics) of Italy's 61 million population (Nadeau 2015). The majority are migrants who entered Italy within the last two decades, mainly from Morocco, Albania, Tunisia, Egypt, Senegal, Pakistan, Turkey, Algeria, Somalia, Nigeria, Syria and Ethiopia (Allievi 2003).

In this half of the chapter, I have shown how the arrival of an increasing number of Muslim migrant groups into Italy engendered a number of anti-Muslim attitudes among citizens that normalized deeply negative stereotypes about these migrants, thus making the vilification of Islam a mainstream practice. As such, Islamophobia appears to be the “new racism”; it is overt, normalized, politicized, ideologized, and yet highly contested. In the next half of the chapter, I argue that the current debate on migration in Italy is one that is based on the fear of the Muslim “Other,” legitimizing a new form of racism leading to the construction and the propagation of a fully-fledged Islamophobic discourse.

V. Problematizing Islamophobia

In this half of the chapter, I start by providing a short overview of the contentious concept of Islamophobia, contextualizing it within the literature of anthropological theory and migration. I then examine the “racialization” of Muslim migrants and the way this process is used to implement an increasing number of restrictive migration policies and programs that normalize new forms of xenophobia and exacerbate anti-Muslim rhetoric. My aim is to demonstrate that under newly implemented migration policies, the growing climate of suspicion and intolerance conceals Italy's real socio-economic and political issues. I use personal narratives to demonstrate the impacts of Islamophobia on the identity construction and everyday life of migrants. For example, Soufiane's testimony who tells the following story describes a troubling incident of Islamophobia in Palermo:

One afternoon as Farhat was walking down Via Maqueda (the Muslim district in Palermo) with his veiled Bangladeshi wife and two children, two young, tattooed Sicilian men drove close to them with their Vespa and threw a plastic bottle of liquid on his wife's face. The bottle turned out to be filled with urine. The two men cheered, took off on their Vespa, and disappeared. That happened in front of many people on busy Via Maqueda and nobody dared to react—not even Farhat (Interview 04/29/2014).

Another testimony recounted to me by Nidhal, a 29-year old young man who landed in Lampedusa on March 22, 2014. Of his rescue experience, Nidhal said:

We miraculously arrived to Lampedusa on March 22, 2014 at 6:00 in the morning. All the people on the boat were safe, yet extremely tired, hungry, and thirsty. As we disembarked at the military harbor of Lampedusa, a number of people from humanitarian NGOs and charitable organizations rushed to hand us tiny packets of biscuits and small bottles of water. When one Tunisian migrant started complaining about the biscuits, asking for a proper sandwich, a *carabiniere* gave him a look of disgust and said, “You should be lucky we did not throw you and the other terrorists in the sea.” This is my first encounter with Italian *hogra*²¹ (racism) (Interview 07/21/2014).

When I arrived to Lampedusa on the morning July 15, 2014, I could not wait, but rushed outside and made my first exploration of the island and its physicality. As soon as I got close to the *Centro Loran*, I immediately broke out into “goose bumps.” It had militaristic aspect; it looked like a huge prison. Although the *Centro* was deserted, its walls were still covered with anti-Muslim, anti-migrant, and pro-migrant slogans. Its graffiti were inscribed in Arabic, Italian, and the Tunisian vernacular. Some writings were also blacked out with white spray paint. I could read expressions such as “*Musulmani nel forno* (Muslims in the oven); *Arabi terrositi* (Arabs are terrorists); and *l'Italia all Italiani* (Italy for the Italians). Other slogans were in Arabic such as ‘*hourriya* (freedom), *karama* (dignity), *tahya Lampedusa* (viva Lampedusa), *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is great), and even the famous slogan in French of the Tunisian uprising: *Dégage* (translation), which was chanted on January 13, 2011, on Habib Bourguiba Avenue in Tunis. As I was reading those slogans, I started to develop a feeling of disgust, especially when my eyes came across the following set of very racist and derogatory slogans: *Tornasse in Africa* (Return to Africa); *fiero di*

²¹ This is a literal translation. There is no word for Islamophobia in the Tunisian vernacular.

essere facista (proud to be fascist); *Terroristi islamici di merda* (shitty Islamic terrorists); *bruciate alvivi e tutti i clandestini* (burn them alive those clandestines); *via gli immigranti* (migrants out); *viva la lega*” (Viva the Lega Nord); *musulmani fuori* (Muslims out); *tutti in mare* (All in the sea); and *Tunisini al forno* (Tunisians in the oven).

As I started my daily conversations with the locals, I was shocked that many Lampedusans such as students, bar men, shopkeepers, teachers, and fishermen were still complaining and condemning what they referred to as the “Islamic invasion” of Tunisians in the aftermath of the 2011 uprising. They claimed that their main concern was the collapsing tourism industry in the island. Many Lampedusans I spoke to had taken part in various riots to push the local authorities and Italian government to lock up “Muslim invaders” and “dangerous terrorists” in centers and prisons or, even better, send them back so that they are no longer visible to them nor to the small tourist community. This hostility demonstrates the escalation of xenophobic and Islamophobic attitudes among the local population.

i. What is Islamophobia?

No analysis of Muslim migration in Western Europe today is complete without a consideration of the significant rise in Islamophobia, the polemic and emotional repercussions engendered in this concept, and why it is so deeply disputed semantically as well as politically.

To begin: the word Islamophobia, even though transliterated as such in Modern Standard Arabic اسلاموفوبيا does not have any equivalent in the Tunisian vernacular. The only word Tunisians use to refer to this phenomenon is either عنصرية, *onsuriyya* or *hogra* حقرة, which literally means racism or humiliation. In the Oxford English dictionary, Islamophobia is defined as “a hatred or fear of Islam or Muslims, especially when feared as a political force.” For the purpose of my analysis, I alter the term to the plural, Islamophobias, because the plural can more adequately

capture its highly contextualized nature. Interestingly, despite its frequent occurrence, there is a distinctive absence of clarity about what Islamophobia is and is not, what it means linguistically, and how to track its development.

Islamophobia seems to encompass a variety of forms of discourse, acts, and praxis—all based on an identical ideological premise: a fear or phobia of Islam as a backward and/or violent religion. Within this Islamophobic discourse, Islam is perceived as “a single monolithic bloc where Muslims’ diversity is overlooked both in terms of the difference between Muslims and also between Muslims and non-Muslims” (Allen 2013:69). Consequently, a number of negative stereotypes become projected onto all Muslims and “any episode in which an individual Muslim is judged to have behaved badly is used as an illustrative example to condemn all Muslims without exception,” a strategy that leads to a generalized and deliberate racialization and criminalization of all Muslims (Allen 2013: 69). Thus, Muslims become categorized as a homogenous and fixed population in some way responsible and accountable for the wrongs perpetrated by those Muslims whose practice of Islam denotes violence and terror. Stefano, a 52-year-old, UNHCR staff member, described the problem:

Unfortunately, we are dealing with Tunisians who happen to be Muslims and who quickly get labelled as criminals, wrongly turning Islam into a religion of crime and violence. It is so easy to put many people in one box, you know. Why would you make any effort to understand and attempt to know the real story and circumstances of the person behind the label or even listen to his hidden predicament? Unfortunately, I do not see any solution to the stereotyping and escalating Islamophobia towards the Tunisians and the larger Muslim migrant community in Agrigento and Sicily, or Italy at large (Interview 07/12/2014).

In *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*, Said writes that “Islam has been historically seen as a challenge to Christianity, as a blasphemous religion, Muhammad as a false prophet, as containing the latent power to threaten and dominate the West as it had done in the Ottoman Empire” (Said: 1997:5). As Said observed, this

“orientalist” position marginalizes Islam and Muslims in a world where Western modernity is the norm and where there is little room for Islam because it remains subjected to the historical specificities of the West’s Christian and secular experiences. In this situation, Muslims, in general, and Muslim migrants, in particular, with their distinct, religio-cultural traits have been constructed as the new “Others” or the new “threat.” This “Otherization” became more politicized in the context of the “war against terror,” justifying a new racism based on a constructed discourse of cultural difference (Esposito and Kalin 2011). These negative portrayals of Muslims, exacerbated by the recent terrorist acts claimed by ISIS, are becoming widespread, essentializing Muslim migrants, inflaming more anti-Muslim sentiment, and engendering new discourses on racialization, ethnicity, difference, religion, migration, globalization, and human rights.

Mario, a 35-year-old restaurant owner, who I met while having dinner at his restaurant in old Palermo, sat down at my table and started telling me how the entire island of Sicily was now full of Muslims. In his view, this is a jihad against the Italian people. He added that all Italians must wake up and start fighting for the safety of their nation. He said,

“The situation is fucked up, and I do not think that it will change anytime soon. I have been living in Palermo all my life, and I have never witnessed this huge number of Muslim migrants in my city. There are way too many of them. Because of their presence, Palermo has become congested, polluted, and extremely dirty. They have no manners or any form of civil behavior. They talk loudly, throw trash in the streets, and engage in all kinds of violent and criminal activities. You know that historic Palermo is fully inhabited by them. Walk down Via Maqueda, Via Roma, and even Via Libertà now, and you will not see a single Palermitan. They pushed us out and occupied our city. I am not only talking about Tunisians and North Africans, but also the newly established community of Bangladeshi. It is sad for me to say that Palermo has become a third-world city. Who would have expected that? This is truly unbelievable. *Che scchifo* (How disgusting). *Basta adesso* (Enough now). Things have to change (Interview 08/16/2014).

Mario’s testimony demonstrates the intense, widespread, anti-Muslim sentiments prevailing in Palermo. These beliefs and feelings contribute to essentialist representations and racialization of

the Muslim “Other” as a major threat to the stability of Sicily and a source of anxiety for its entire population. This intrusion of Muslims into Palermo’s public spaces has been viewed as a threat to the national identity, cultural values, morality, and tradition. Palermo, as Mario described, has been converted into a third-world space because of the Muslim migrants’ “invasion.”

ii. Islamophobia: A New Form of Racism

Although racism in modern Europe generally has a biological and scientific aspect, what is critical to the racialization of Muslims today does not involve biology but a radical “Otherness,” requiring a different “Othering” treatment of individuals, not in terms of their physical appearance and phenotype, but in terms of their cultural and religious differences. From an anthropological perspective, race is a social construct, divorced from biology, which categorizes and classifies people based on socially fabricated distinctions. These distinctions could be the larger, cultural differences that set apart “minority groups” from the dominant group, leading to their exclusion and unequal treatment—a process of categorization and stereotyping. To discriminate against those perceived to be culturally different is a new form of racial discrimination in which cultural essentialism and inferiorization intermingle to efface the “Other.” Some argue that this “may still be regarded as a cultural prejudice or cultural exclusionism rather than racism per se, so that if persons are targeted only on the basis of their behavior and not on the basis of their ancestry, then might we not have something we should call culturalism rather than racism?” (Sayyid and Vakil 2010). I contend that, although the biological phrase, “racially inferior,” is here substituted with the phrase, “religiously inferior” or “culturally inferior,” the underlying ideology marginalizes and vilifies the “Other.” Such an ideology or dogma pathologically reinforces the stereotypical traits “glued” to Islam and Muslims, such as “other,” “monolithic,” “sexist,” “oppressive,” “dirty,” “uncivilized,” “third world,” “irrational,” and “violent.” This is Islamophobia at its best,

functioning just as scientific or biological racism does. This happens in a climate where these cultural, Muslim differences are reified to the point of being considered “destabilizing,” a security threat to the national identity and cultural homogeneity of Italian society. In fact, especially in the context of the 2011 Tunisian uprising, the dominant Italian perception of the Tunisian presence in Sicily was framed as a security issue: Tunisians were labelled as Muslim radicals and potential terrorists.

Many Italians, like Mario, claim that their country, security, values, and resources are threatened by the presence of disruptive Muslims, who are dangerous invaders contributing to the cultural destruction of the Italian society. Based on Mario’s account, the “securitization” of migration takes its legitimacy not only from cultural difference, but also from the security-threat discourse that lays the ground for a “new racism,” or, as Ibrahim phrases it, “racism’s most modern form” (Ibrahim 2005). This racism is new or modern in the sense that it transcends classical definitions such that it neither operates by reference to superiority/inferiority dichotomies nor through the physical removal of racialized populations (Meer and Modood, 2009; Sayyid and Vakil 2010, Schiffer and Wagner 2011). Today’s new racism is much more veiled and respectable. It has been built upon more “innocent” and “subtle” configurations, such as preservation of one’s identity, own way of life, and values in the face of the “destabilizing” and damaging effects of other cultures (Ibrahim 2005). This “new racism” or the new “anti-Muslim racism,” as it has been referred to by Kundnani (2007), does not, however, entail the exclusion of previous forms of racist practice; rather, “new racism” implies that current racist discourses used against Muslim migrants are being dominated by the so-called “insurmountability” of cultural differences. Although there is no reference to “race” or “phenotypes” in the classical sense, “new racism,” as Spears puts it, “is still racism in that it functions to maintain racial hierarchies of oppression” (Spears 1999). Balibar

posits that, despite the changes in the “doctrines” or “discourses” of justification, this new racism still sustains the “same old acts” (Balibar 1991:18). In the same vein, Sivanandan (2001:87) argues that today’s racism is not only concerned with color or phenotypes; rather:

It is a racism that is not just directed at those with darker skins, from the former colonial territories, but at the newer categories of the displaced, the dispossessed and the uprooted, who are beating at Western Europe’s doors, the Europe that helped to displace them in the first place. It is a racism, that is, that cannot be color-coded, directed as it is at poor whites as well, and is therefore passed off as xenophobia, a natural fear of strangers. But in the way it denigrates and reifies people before segregating and/or expelling them, it is a xenophobia that bears all the marks of the old racism. It is racism in substance, but ‘xeno’ in form. It is a racism that is meted out to impoverished strangers even if they are white (Sivanandan 2001:87).

Some scholars (Negri 2000, Deleuze and Guattari 2004) even argue that within the terms of this kind of racism, representations of the “moderate Muslim” do not necessarily signal its suspension; rather, they are often signs of its efficacious re-emergence. Deleuze writes that “there are only people who should be like us and whose crime it is not to be...Racism never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness until those who resist identification have been wiped out” (Deleuze et al. 2004:197-198). This type of racism operates within, and outside, the good/bad binary as it sets the “threshold for distinguishing ‘genuine’ Islam from ‘extremist’ Islam” (Mamdani 2002: 767). This, in turn, depicts the political discourse recently adopted by Western governments differentiating between “true Islam” and “Jihadi Islam.” The distinction augments the racialization of “Islamophobic” discourse by reinforcing the relationship between Islam as a religion and terrorism, demonstrating again that the real problem lies in Islam, as an ideology, and not in its representation.

This hatred of Islam as an ideology is well illustrated by Jamal, a 34-year-old man. Jamal has been deported in May 2012 from Palermo and he now lives in Dawar Hicher, Hay Ettadhamen.

The Sicilians, when they show you their true colors, are the worst people you could encounter in your life. I am not sure what we did to them, but they have an ingrained

hatred towards all Muslim and Arab people. I see how they behave with the little Chinese community in Palermo, and right away, I could tell the difference. It is something that they have against Islam. This is obvious (Interview 08/05/2013).

The next story of Hamed is illustrative of what can occur when Islamophobia and police brutality combine. Hamed, a 27-year-old, bearded man from the town of Kairouan, landed in Lampedusa on February 24, 2011, during a very cold dawn. He was running through the streets of the island when he was caught by the police who handcuffed him and drove him to the police station. He spent an entire night there, trying to understand the police's Italian and why he was arrested. The police used hate terms such as *stupido musulmano* and *terrorista* and accused him of stealing a cell phone from a German tourist near the port, with one punching him in the head. The whole experience was infused with laughter, insults, and foul language. Hamed only reacted by stating that he was innocent of any allegations the police were trying to make. Hamed told me that this night not only felt like an eternity, but was also the most humiliating experience of his life. He added that even under the police state of Ben Ali, no one would be treated in such a manner. They Italian police eventually released him the next day after they had arrested the actual criminal, who turned out to be a Ghanian young man who had landed in Lampedusa two weeks before (Interview 05/17/2014).

Ruba Salih writes, "certain Islamic symbols may be actively chosen or imposed as crucial markers of cultural difference" (Salih 2001:1). Hamed's beard might have been such a symbol, i.e., a visible mark as the Muslim "Other," "extremist, and/or potential "thief," and thus the reason for his arrest. A close association between representations of the "extremist" and fear of Islam are strengthened by a tendency to focus on visible manifestations of Muslim identity that evoke particular modes of Islamophobias, which are, in turn, experienced by only a certain type of Muslim. Under this subjectified representation, the Muslim woman's "veil,"²² for instance, is a

²² As far as the veil is concerned, it is important to note here that there are no laws in Italy banning the use of the veil either in public or in private spaces.

“visible statement of separation and difference that acts as an obvious example of how this separateness and difference becomes ‘racialized’ and eventually get coded as ‘extremist’” (Allen and Nielson 2002, Sheridan 2006).

In spite of this racial profiling and his feeling of “being different,” Hamed told me that he was more determined not to lose focus, falter, or be discouraged. He challenged his social construction as the dangerous “Other” by staying calm at the police station and deciding not to overreact. His strategy for not being provoked by incidents of Islamophobia was to purposefully recall his sea crossing. He claimed that nothing could be worse than that horrible *harqa* when he was close to death and battling for his life: “*galbi met*” (my heart died). He also felt more empowered and determined to attain his migration goals such as getting a *halal* job making lots of money, and returning to Tunisia. Hamed’s resilience, determination, and confidence seemed extraordinary to me. His main obsession now is

to learn Italian so that I can respond back to these racist Sicilians and stop them from doing what they are doing. Only through mastering the Italian language, can one act and start to resist. The problem here is that even the language they use in Palermo is not Italian; it is Sicilian, and it is very different from the Italian you hear on TV and on the radio. I only know a few words, but I am determined to learn more and become fluent. Only then I can fight efficiently for myself and for my fellow Tunisians (Interview 05/17/2014).

Nejah, a 32-year old man, was also determined to succeed. He had shaved his beard and stopped wearing his Islamic outfits²³ because both beard and clothing made him visible as a Muslim migrant and would reduce his access to jobs or other resources. Also, as he pointed out to me, he did not want to attract unnecessary looks, insults, and other derogatory and racist comments from members of his host society. He whispered that Abdel Karim, his new Moroccan friend, told him to

²³ An example is the *salwar and kameez*, a traditional outfit originating in the Indian subcontinent that was introduced in Tunisia along with Salafism. In the aftermath of the Tunisian uprising these outfits became very popular in townships and neighborhoods such Hay Ettadhamen, Hay Ettahrir, and Hay Ibn Khaldun.

keep a low profile as the mafia recently declared that they would wipe all the Muslims out by burning them alive. He went on:

As far as my faith is concerned, I will take care of it personally by praying in my studio by myself, *ana w' rabbi* (My God and I). This is better also because I do not want to flash my being Muslim in front of everybody, especially now when all Italians think of us as terrorists and call us “Bin Ladens and Talibans.” I sometimes have strong feelings of resentment towards this country. I do not even understand how they can get away with these labels and racist attitudes towards us. Maybe those terrorist acts are good for them after all. I sometimes have no compassion towards them because of the way they treated us from the very first day we landed in Lampedusa until today (interview 04/28/2014).

Mourad, like many of his compatriots in Sicily, also started to avoid going to mosques because of his fear of being spotted and perceived as a “potential terrorist”:

I started to feel anxious and avoided frequenting the mosque as much as possible because he was told that the police in Palermo have an eye on everyone who goes there and that could raise unnecessary suspicion, which I do not need. I honestly went to the mosque because I was expecting some of the well-off Muslim brothers, mainly Bangladeshi traders, to help me with some *sadaqa* (charity) as well as to assist me in finding a job in their custom jewelry, booming business (interview 06/03/2014).

As this passage demonstrates, some Muslims believe, that to avoid social stigma, harassment, and provocation, they have to avoid, in public spaces, any visible ties that link them to Islam, such as beards, religious clothing, and going to a mosque. Mourad confessed to being sad about his decisions because it restricted his freedom to be himself although he now was much less self-conscious, a feeling that in itself had been a heavy burden for him to carry. Like Mourad, a number of study participants, especially the religious ones, found themselves leading a double life: one that is secular and non-Muslim in appearance when in town, and the one that is religious, pious, and traditional in garb at home. Nejah confessed that when life became difficult, he stayed home, opened his Quran, and read a few *suras* (verses). Reading the Quran brought peace to his heart and not only made him feel better, but also stronger and more able to cope.

As I have argued above, Islamophobia in Italy has become an ideology that mutates constantly as it becomes more socio-culturally coded and manipulated. It is also a dangerous ideology, and migrants of Muslim background such as the study participants are its principle victims. Members of the Italian extreme right and anti-migration politicians, such as those of the Lega Nord, have successfully propagated the image of Muslims as a challenge to Italy's "cultural harmony" and "national security." Members of the Northern League applauded Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi when he declared, "We are proud bearers of the supremacy of western civilization, which has brought us democratic institutions, respect for the human, civil, religious and political rights of our citizens, openness to diversity and tolerance of everything... Europe must revive on the basis of common Christian roots" (The Guardian, London, 27 September 2001: 15). He went on to add, "We don't want Italy to become a multiethnic, multicultural country. We are proud of our traditions." For Berlusconi and others of his ilk, "multiculturalism" is a code word for attacking the culturally diverse societies that extreme right politicians customarily despise.

Italian politicians from other conservative political parties have similarly sought to frame multiculturalism as an outrage that threatens the cohesiveness of the Italian "national" culture by disrupting its core values. They are not alone in their anger; other European politicians of the far right argue repeatedly that many Muslim religious extremists have prospered from multiculturalism and contend that an "Islamification" of Europe is underway. As such, the current Italian and European debate on integration and assimilation emphasizes a strong incompatibility between Western culture with its democratic values and Muslim culture, which is "neither based on Western democratic principles nor [...] sensitive to Western standards of human rights" (Banakar 2008:73). For many politicians in Italy, multiculturalism has enabled a situation in which Muslim migrants'

religious fundamentalism and acts of terrorism could pose a challenge and a “security threat” to Italy’s Catholic identity, its homogeneity, and the principle of “*laicità*” (laicity).

In Italy, there is a growing opposition towards the building of mosques, *masajid* (prayer spaces), and Islamic centers that would allow the Muslim migrant community to enjoy the freedom of worship. This opposition finds its roots in discourses of nativism, essentialism, and homogenization, which make it possible for conservative and racist groups to defend their values and their way of life. Their argument follows the same populist rhetoric that uses culturalist and religious discourses to establish and reinforce a dialectical and hostile relationship between Italians as “natives” and Muslim migrants as “foreigners.”

VII. Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the research questions that I posed in the Introduction to this dissertation, particularly those involving the criminalization and dehumanization of the Tunisian migrants: how these processes impacted their daily lives and the ways in which the migrants permitted and rationalized, experienced and negotiated or resisted the violence against them and their socially constructed “illegality” and “criminality.”

In the first half of the chapter, I argued that the prevalent Italian policies, media, and discourse about migration constructs the Tunisian migrant as a risk-subject, i.e., as the new “security threat.” I also analyzed the social construction of the Tunisian migrant as the “Other” or the “potential criminal” by exploring the effects of the “criminalizing” migration policies implemented by the Italian state. What emerges from the ethnographic data is that the lack of a coherent and reasonable migration policy ironically generates and produces the same “irregularity” that the state is trying to curb. Throughout this analysis and illustrative narratives, I identified some of the ways in which negative images of the Tunisian migrant gets constructed and propagated. In this process, I

demonstrated how the increasing wave of ultra-conservative and far right parties in Italy created an ideal scapegoat: The Tunisian migrant.

In the second half of the chapter, I scrutinized the slippery concept of “Islamophobia.” Throughout my analysis of this highly contested term, I was motivated less by the challenge of determining its connotations than by the effort to recognize its politicized aspects and its variability. Throughout the analysis, I demonstrated how Islamophobia functioned as a form of cultural racism, or to use Balibar’s phrase, “racism without race” (1991), which constructs and propagates the image of the Muslim as a “threat.” I demonstrated that there is almost no culture of integration in Italy today; rather, the emphasis is on what I call a “forced assimilation” as Muslim migrant groups are expected to almost completely disconnect with their Muslim background. Under this stream of cultural racism or “negation of otherness” (Joppke 2007), some have altered their socio-cultural and religious characteristics to integrate and access resources.

Moreover, this chapter is interspersed with selected narratives to gain further insights into the everyday worlds of the irregular migrants in this study. My aim was to see how, on their own terms, they faced the challenges of Islamophobia, hostility, and suspicion and both experienced and negotiated their lived, essentialized experiences of fear, powerlessness, and humiliation on their own terms. I tried to provide a space where these individuals could become actors in crafting their own narrative discourses by rethinking their various positions within the current normative migration discourse in Italy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND RESISTANCE

I. Introduction

Jameleddine's story:

Life here²⁴ is extremely difficult and challenging. We are trapped in this *habs* (prison), and I truly mean *habs* with all its *mizirya* (misery) and *dommar* (angst). *Famma barcha hogra w' barcha qahr* (There is a lot of humiliation and a lot of oppression). Yet, you have no choice but to always be *sindiid* (very strong) and do everything you can to hide your weakness. It is a daily struggle, but no one here should underestimate his ability for survival and resistance. No one must forget that we did a revolution. Tunisians are strong and powerful and nothing can defeat them.

To survive, *Ettwansa houni* (Tunisians here) must have a lot of self-confidence, courage, and audacity. You have to distrust everyone, don't talk too much, keep resisting, and never ever give up. At times, it is exhausting [sigh...], but what choice do you have? *Yilzmik taaqif ala saqiiq* (You have to stand on your feet). *Yilzmik tahchihoulhom qbal ma yitahcheliq* (You have to screw them before they screw you).²⁵ It is a *ghaaba* (jungle). Jameliddine sighed. [His account continues with how his friend Mohsen Zatla²⁶ being mad at the unbearable living conditions at the Center and the cruelty of the Carabinieri, threatened to burn down the facility and purposefully drunk bleaching liquid and a whole bottle of shampoo with the intent to be transferred to the local hospital and then escape from there, get to the French border and catch a train to Paris....] (Interview 08/15/2014).

Jamaledidine, who told me this story, was a well-spoken young man who always tried to present himself as a “tough guy” although he was small and frail; his hands trembled; and I could see the suffering in his eyes. Toughness was his strategy for surviving the hostility of the deportation-center environment where he was treated as if he were less than human: a “body” that had to be monitored and sometimes oppressed, humiliated, and abused. He said that he would sometimes get into unnecessary quarrels with no apparent provocation, just to raise his

²⁴ The speaker was in the Trapani Milo *Centro di Identificazione (CIE)*, which is located in the countryside of Trapani, and, like other identification centers, is a very difficult place from which to escape.

²⁵ As in English, the Tunisian expression has a sexual connotation.

²⁶ Nicknamed Mohsen *Zatla* because of his heavy addiction to hashish. *Zatla* is the popular word for ‘hashish’ in Tunisia.

voice and show how tough he is. He described this action as a survival mechanism that seemed to be working so far. In order to stay strong and never weaken, Jamaledidine forged a new identity for himself. This new identity, or “counter-identity,” was a shield to protect himself from the daily experiences of oppression, stigmatization, and marginalization. Berry et al. (1989) point out that marginalization is not easily defined, possibly because it is accompanied by a good deal of collective and individual disorientation and anxiety. It is a situation of social dislocation where people suffer feelings of alienation, loss of identity, and what has been termed “acculturative stress” (Berry et al. 1989:4). Despite his ordeal, Jameleddine’s strategy of survival and resistance was this: “One must have a lot of self-confidence, courage, and audacity. One has to distrust everyone, not to talk too much, keep resisting, and never ever give up.” As Hammaren states, “Counter-identities emerge as means of coping with segregation and feelings of being an outsider” (Hammaren, 2008).

The aim of this chapter is to explore one of my research questions: what are these forms of violence and oppression and their consequences on the migrants’ identities but, more importantly, on their survival and resistance strategies and transborder social engagements? Hence I scrutinize how migrants engage with their migration project by actively moving away from having no status and becoming resisting political subjects (Nyers 2010). I focus on the ways in which study participants, through various forms of resistance, claimed their rights and protected themselves from potential deportation by subverting sovereign control and destabilizing their enforced invisibility and potential deportability, thereby producing new formulae of political belonging (Isin 2009). I argue that their survival and resistance strategies emerged from the 2011 uprising and were subsequently exported to Italy. I examine both individual and collective tactics of survival and resistance that Tunisian migrants employed to see how they informed, challenged, or disrupted their

constructions as “threats” to Italian sovereignty. In doing so, I show how their protests, i.e., acts of political participation, framed their resistance narrative and then explore the ways in which this narrative informs or contests how migrants are constructed and categorized. I am interested in acts of survival and resistance, i.e., local and transnational, individual and collective, and their ability to disturb power structures and the oppressive migration story that had developed within Italian society.

The first part of this chapter lays out the theoretical framework in which my argument is grounded. I discuss migrants’ resistance movements in the academic literature to shed light on concepts such as acts of resistance, migrants’ daily struggles, and coping strategies. The second part of the chapter focuses on how Tunisian migrants managed to reverse their situation of vulnerability and invisibility by actively and collectively affirming their “right to claim a right” (Isin, 2009:380). One of the main questions that I will address is how Tunisian irregular migrants can engage effectively in resistance movements and protest against the border-control machinery while at the same time being a vulnerable and often silenced population. Scott’s (Scott 1990) concept of “weapons of the weak” provides me with a tool to examine migrants’ everyday resistance and how it contributes to both the protection of their rights and the advancement of claims that concern the mobility-restriction and potential deportation. I use vignettes of migrants’ lives and actions to illustrate my arguments about survival strategies and resistance.

II. From “Invisibility” to “Visibility”

Migration literature has failed to take into account migrants’ agency, subjectivity, and resistance strategies (Andrijasevic & Anderson 2009), offering a simplistic framework in which migrants “are represented as destitute and frustrated people driven by economic and/or humanitarian needs in an increasingly globalized society” (Aradau & Huysmans 2009:586). This conceptualization of the

migrant as a powerless victim no longer holds true in light of their increasing empowerment and political participation. In fact, refugees and irregular migrants have now become significant actors in global struggles that involve freedom of mobility, social recognition, worker protections, and the right of asylum (McNevin 2006).

Protests and hunger strikes by migrants are proliferating and have become more organized, thereby becoming a new mechanism of political participation and collective condemnation of the various forms of power and oppression suffered by migrants on a daily basis. As Foucault (1996) states, the diffuse nature of power always provides a possibility for resistance. Scott's important study (Scott 1985) on the livelihood of secluded, rural communities in Southeast Asia elucidates how weak subalterns develop both active and safe means of resistance that allows them to revolt against tough post-totalitarian living conditions and adds meaning and value to their lives. Scott's resistance includes "any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for example, landlords, large farmers, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis those superordinate classes" (Scott 1985: 290). Scott argues that, at times, resistance can encapsulate "explosive moments of power," which he coined a "Saturnalia of power," capable of toppling whole political systems (Scott 1990: 340-350). He further asserts that "most of the political life of subordinate groups is to be found neither in overt collective defiance of power holders nor in complete hegemonic compliance, but in the vast territory between these two polar opposites" (Scott 1990: 136). As this chapter demonstrates, the Tunisian migrants of this study reject their label as "passive victims" by drawing upon survival strategies and modes of resistance that shift them from being invisible to the public and media to becoming visible, a state that Ruggiero calls "reappearance" (Ruggiero, 2000:54).

i. Bodily Self-inflicting Harm

One significant “weapon of the weak” is to self-inflict harm in such a way that it confounds those in power and advances goals and projects. One self-harm tactic used by migrants to get public attention and circumvent deportation is the deliberate defacing of their fingertips so that they have no fingerprints, a highly symbolic act that cleverly disrupts the techniques of disciplinary power by making them dysfunctional and irrelevant. Nawfel, a 24-year-old man I interviewed in Siacca, told me “No Fingerprints” was a strategy only used by brave migrants because

it requires the burning of your fingertips which only the most courageous, those who have a *glaiib* (heart), could do. We all know that if you refuse to give your hand for fingerprinting, the Italian authorities will physically force you to place it on the digital fingerprinting machine. So, you really have no choice, but to burn them. Everyone knows that by law the Italian authorities will never be able to deport you if they cannot determine your nationality or your true identity (Interview 06/18/2014).

The annihilation of one’s fingerprints is an extreme act that challenges the validity of the migration system. According to Broeders and Engbersen, acts of bodily self-inflicted harm are used by some as a “strategy to protect oneself against the state’s inquisitive eyes is to hide one’s personal (legal) identity. Manipulation of personal identity is one of the major strategies adopted by illegal aliens who want to prevent detection by the state” (Broeders and Engbersen 2007: 1598).

After burning their fingertips, the Tunisian migrants, aware that they were considered “economic refugees” with no chance of obtaining asylum, could pretend to be Palestinians, Iraqi, or Syrian political asylum seekers whose refugee claims were more acceptable to Italian authorities. The destruction of fingerprints allowed migrants to circumvent the refugee system, obtain political refugee status, or at the very least, lengthen the administrative process so that they can eventually escape from detention centers. Papadopoulos and Tsianos call this a strategy of “de-identification,” which is “not primarily a question of shifting identification ascriptions; it is a material and an

embodied way of being. The strategy of de-identification is a voluntary ‘dehumanization’, in the sense that it breaks the relation between one’s name and one’s body” (2007:166). In this way, migrants escape sovereign control, which relies on identification in order to create new forms of political subjectivities (Papadopoulos et al 2008).

Migrants used other tactics of bodily self-inflicted harm to protest and gain visibility. For example, a few migrants held at Rome’s *Ponte Galeria* Detention Center sewed their mouths shut as an extreme form of protest against the Center’s dehumanizing regime and the authorities’ total ignorance of their asylum claims. In addition, if their demands were not met, they threatened to immolate themselves. Photographs of these young men with their sewn lips were immediately displayed across social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter as well as some migration blogs and websites. Other self-harm activities such as hunger strikes and vein slitting [see Ajmi and Farid’s story in the Introduction] have become more frequent in many Italian detention centers.

ii. “The Right to Claim Rights”

Through acts of resistance, Tunisian migrants not only claimed their right against deportation, but also affirmed their “right to claim rights” (Isin, 2009: 380). With this claim, Tunisian migrants become what Isin (2008) calls “activist citizens” (Isin, 2009: 38). According to Bojadzijeve and Karakayali, these acts of political participation and public resistance can be considered as an “appropriation of citizenship” (Bojadzijeve and Karakayali 2010: 8), which both disrupts the image of irregular migrants as “depoliticized objects” and re-interrogates the concept of citizenship as a pre-requisite for political belonging (Nyers 2010). Citizenship itself is a contested concept. For some scholars, citizenship should be conceived of in its legal links “between individual and polity; for others, it signifies active engagement in the life of the community. For some, it is largely a

matter of individual justice, while for others still; it implicates pressing questions of collective identity” (Bosniak 2000: 455).

In discussing migrants’ acts of resistance, Walters describes them as “those constitutive moments, performances, enactments and events when a new identity, substance or relationship of citizenship is brought into existence” (Walters 2008: 191). Isin (2008) uses the expression “acts of citizenship,” which is employed to “focus on those moments when, regardless of status and substance, subjects constitute themselves as citizens—or, better still, as those to whom the right to have rights is due” (p. 18). It is clear that many migrants now refuse to follow traditional, authoritative processes to acquire legal status. As Broeders and Engbersen state, “The irregular immigrant has thus become a direct challenge to the state’s notions on legal mobility and territoriality in a globalized world” (2007:1594).

iii. Individual Acts of Survival and Coping Strategies

In addition to extreme forms of resistance, I argue that, although irregular migrants’ other survival strategies and coping mechanisms are less dramatic as “weapons of the weak,” they are no less significant as acts of resistance to power structures that have denied them rights and opportunities. For example, irregular migrants do not have access to jobs because of their “illegal” status. However, study participants needed to secure a living and engaged in activities such as in the *lavoro nero* (informal labor market/black market) or paying for *awraq mathrouba* (fake documents). Stories of purchasing fake *permessos* were very common and kept reoccurring during interviews and informal conversations.

Study participants also repeatedly used the term *nwarraq* (to get the papers) to describe the process of attaining “legal” resident status. By forging fake identities via criminal networks, migrants could move from an irregular status to a regular one simply by paying a fee/bribe. This

was acknowledged by Tarek, who informed me that his *permesso di soggiorno* cost him 500 Euros which he is paying in installments. Many of his friends had done the same thing, and some had successfully obtained jobs, mostly in northern Italy in cities such as Ancona, Milano, and Torino. However, not all the stories had happy endings. For example, Aladdine, a 28-year-old Tunisian migrant, paid 2,500 Euros, all of his savings from selling hashish, to an allegedly trustworthy middleman from Siacca who promised him a work contract and the necessary papers for his *permesso di soggiorno*. Then the middleman took the money and disappeared. Migrants in the study population commonly acted in a fraudulent manner for the purpose of obtaining false documents to avoid their socio-economic and political exclusion and potential deportation to create access to an array of resources enjoyed by “legal” migrants. Despite this illegality, such acts demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit, resilience, and a strong sense of agency. De Haas defines agency as “the limited but real capacity of individuals to overcome constraints and potentially reshape structure” (De Haas, 2010: 241).

Study participants also talked repeated about hunger strikes, along with threats of immolation, as ways to resist, express anger, and attain goals. Many informants threatened to immolate themselves like Mohamed Bouazizi, the young man whose self-immolation in December 2010 sparked the 2011 Tunisian uprising. For instance, Belgacem, a 34-year-old Tunisian in detention was placed in solitary confinement because of violent behavior. He started a wild hunger strike to protest the delay in the handling of his application for political asylum. He claimed that, if he were deported, Tunisian authorities would immediately arrest him because of his business involvement with Imed Trabelsi, a brother-in-law of Ben Ali, who was known for his unparalleled corruption and mafia-like involvement during Ben Ali’s rule. As Belgacem

became more certain of his imminent deportation, he threatened to set himself on fire²⁷ if his political asylum application was not approved. His application was rejected, and he was deported back to Tunisia where I met him and conducted an interview. Obviously, Belgacem did not immolate himself as he had claimed he would in his threat (Field notes, 08/06/13).

Another survival strategy employed by migrants was to not open their mouths, regardless the situation. Many claimed that a deliberate “*Al samt*” (silence) was the best resistance strategy because not speaking does not break any law, compromise their situation, and/or run the risk of being detained or deported. As Beji, a 23-year-old man, told me,

My silence towards the Italians’ racism and ill-treatment started since the very first moment, when the *Italian coast guard approached the chqaf (boat)*. The first few words they uttered were *ancora un altra invasione* (again, another invasion) ... *Tunisini di merda* (shitty Tunisians). They probably did not know that some people on the boat had been migrants before and knew Italian perfectly. Yet, we heard those racist words and kept quiet because it would be stupid to react. As they say in Tunisia, *koll lil kalb ya si kalboun hatta y’chokk biik il waad* (call the dog, Mr. Doggy, until he helps you to cross the river) (Interview 05/19/2014).

The most common coping strategy for some participants who wanted to forget about the oppressive and degrading atmosphere within detention centers and outside in the society was to “self-medicate.” These migrants were addicted to alcohol and *zatla* (hashish). I met Lamjed, a porter at Palermo’s Ballaro market on a Sunday afternoon. When I asked him how he copes with the difficulties of his daily life, Lamjed responded that “drinking and smoking *zatla* are my only two coping mechanisms. *Diima nbambi...diima mkhartil* (I am always high...I am always stoned). If I stopped these two addictions, I would probably put an end to my life. They are my oxygen.” As Yee et al. state, “Substance abuse is used as a coping mechanism for dealing with adaptation to a foreign and sometimes hostile social or cultural environment” (Yee & Thu 1987:78).

²⁷ When tensions were high, members of the study population often threatened self-immolation, using the Italian phrase, *mi mettermi a fuoco* (I will set myself on fire).

II. Transnationalism, Social Networks, and Social Media

Castles uses the term, “transnational turn,” when discussing migrants who, after being integrated in the receiving society, maintain their national identity mainly via transnational networks (2009). The Tunisian migrants of this study had social networks with their families and friends using telecommunication tools such as the telephone and internet. These trans-border social networks, along with the support of local contacts and that of other connections such as NGOs and charitable organizations, helped them with survival tactics and strategies to navigate their migration journey, to learn about legal issues associated with migration, and to initiate and/or participate in creative acts of survival and resistance. Transnationalism, as discussed in Chapter 2, plays a key role in determining the likelihood and level of socio-political participation of a migrant community and its ability to nurture various ties and contacts with people and alliances across multiple borders. These transnational networks constitute what Basch et al. (1994) and Levitt and Schiller (2008) refer to as the “social field”: “migrant networks are viewed as constituting a single social field created by a network of networks,” which can be strategically used as a tool for gaining access to resources and countering instances of oppression and subordination in the host society (Levitt et al. 2008:286).

According to Basch, Schiller, and Blanc (1994), social fields can be defined as sets of manifold, intertwined networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are exchanged, processed, and transmuted within and across borders. Social fields are multi-dimensional and include multiple interactions of differing forms, depths and breadths, such as those involving organizations, institutions, and movements (Basch et al. 1994). These exchanges not only reinforce a sense of community, but also, at times, challenge the host society’s national sovereignty and its ability to control its borders. In other words, social fields endow a migrant community with a sense of empowerment for socio-political organization and participation. According to Portes,

transnationalism includes migrant activities “that take place on a recurrent basis across national borders and that require a regular and significant commitment of time by participants...These activities are not limited to economic enterprises (such as sending and receiving remittances, or setting up a business ‘back home’), but include political, cultural and religious activities as well” (Portes 1999:464).

i. Social Networks

Migrants’ use of local and/or transnational social networks contributes, I argue, to the establishment of support mechanisms and the reinforcement of feelings of assurance, solidarity, trust, and loyalty among Tunisian migrant community members. As Fennema (2004: 439) argues, “There is no ethnic community without certain forms of embedded trust.” The migrants of this study came together as a bounded group, especially after their arrival in Lampedusa, with the aim of lessening the painful impact of the sea crossing, handling the culture shock of being in a new country, and being more at ease in their new environment. As Rocha-Trindade notes, this grouping is an attempt to compensate for certain deficiencies provoked by the migration process (Rocha-Trindade 1986). In the case of the Tunisian migrants, the networks of friends and/or relatives were crucial in providing the newcomers with survival information and a “kit” of resistance strategies. This information included tips on qualifying for political asylum, making appropriate statements to authorities, finding an intermediary to acquire the needed documents, and providing contacts for job opportunities and housing. In addition, social networks, via word-of-mouth, informed migrants about NGOs that provided free food, used clothes, medications, toiletries, and, in some cases, free access to lawyers.

Transnationalism is based on effective communication and transport systems that “facilitate the growth of circular or temporary mobility, in which people migrate repeatedly between two or

more places where they have economic, social or cultural linkages” (Castles and Miller, 2009:30). Tunisians, at home, are well known for sustaining strong ties through the practice of reciprocity, i.e., providing assistance and support to one another in times of need. This social trait contributes to strong social support networks, especially when they are abroad, and allows them to acquire social capital, which paves the way for access to the host society and builds the type of empowerment that enables them to claim their rights. Moreover, the migrants in this study did not break the links they had with their Tunisian compatriots elsewhere. Networks with family, friends, and acquaintances in Tunisia, France, Germany, Sweden, and even Canada were carefully maintained and nurtured. For example, Abdel Jabbar told me that he chatted almost every day with his cousin, Samir, who lives in Lyons, France. Samir had escaped Tunisia after the uprising, crossed the border between Italy and France, and arrived in Lyons where he received shelter, food, and other types of support from his friend Atef who has been living there for almost a decade. Samir had financed Abdel Jabbar’s *harqa* and had recently sent him 250 Euros so that he could pay his last share of rent, clear his small debts, and get a train ticket to Lyons. Samir also promised to give him shelter, feed him, and help him get a job as a night guard in an Auto Repair Garage where he had been working for the last two years. Samir and Abdel Jabbar chatted via Skype, Viber, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger, exchanging visual information such as photos and small videos of their living conditions, visited places, family events, food, selfies, and romantic adventures. Abdel Jabbar’s ideas about Lyons were very positive and based exclusively on information provided by his cousin. Notably, it is common for a migrant to give a rosy picture of his new life, which is far from reality, in order to show family and friends that his migration has been a “success story.” Although study participants generally had strong social networks, a few had ones that had weakened, failing to meet their purpose, or disappeared altogether. The latter usually occurred when either a relative or friend lost

his job and was no longer able to provide financial support or when he had been deported, a frequent occurrence.

ii. Social Capital

Social capital is an important concept in migration and social networks studies that analyze the various relationships and strategies of migrant populations. Meyerson (1994) defines social capital as the pool of valuable relationships that a person has collected over time. Bourdieu (1985) describes social capital as follows: “The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu, 1985:248). Thanks to social capital, migrants have resources that provide access to jobs and social benefits such as those provided by family, friends, and charitable organizations. Social capital also helps migrants avoid the police, arrest, and deportation because networks provide information on tactics of visibility and invisibility.

Social capital, deriving from migrants’ social networks, can be classified as either material or cultural. Although the study population needed money and goods, their most important social capital was cultural, i.e., the information communicated to them via their networks before and after their migration experience that helped them minimize risks and resist attitudes of social stigma, oppression, and humiliation. Abdel Jabbar demonstrated the importance of this support when he described conversations with his cousin Samir:

When things get tough, I call my cousin and ask him to send me some money. During our frequent conversations, he does not hesitate to give me tips and share his experiences so that I can learn and refrain from making the same mistakes he did. I enjoy talking to him because he knows how to listen to me, and he carefully keeps my secrets. I also take his advice very seriously because he went through a lot of hardships and struggles, but he was successful and is now working and leading a good life in France” (Interview 09/15/2014).

iii. Social Media

The migrants' virtual support systems, created by these social networks, rely heavily on the power of social media to spread information freely and instantaneously across an unlimited number of locations and to link protagonists who not only share ideas and strategies, but also build new relationships, sustain friendship ties, and nurture trust. Most members of the study population had cell phones connected to Wi-Fi, including those who were homeless. They used the phones to Skype with distant family members, get small jobs that were on-demand, listen to music, watch movies, and connect to Facebook. Although most migrants in this study could not afford to buy shoes, they willingly bought the latest mobile phones in brands such as Blackberry and the Apple iPhone—the latter was pricy, but favored by most. Cell phones were also used to secretly take pictures in detention centers, which were later posted on Facebook and other social media to document detention practices for global consumption. In sum, the newly formed political generation, engendered by the North African popular uprisings, created a new space for decentralized, non-institutional activism through its members' shrewd use of social media and cyberspace (Singerman 2014; Khalil 2014).

III. Trans-border and Local Movements

Migrants have the ability to subvert structures of political power by becoming active agents who, through their daily practices, destabilize the border regime (Euskirchen et al 2007; Papadopoulos et al 2008). They also contribute to this destabilization by local and trans-border manifestations, which started with the demonstrations against the G8 summit in Genoa in 2001. The riots and various demonstrations, some of which were very violent, constituted “the first encounter between the global movement and grassroots migrants' organizations” (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2003). Important movements took place in other European countries, such as the *Mouvement Sans Papiers* (Movement of the Undocumented) in France during the mid-1990s. This movement “made a

fundamental challenge to notions of democracy, politics, civil rights and citizenship” (Wright, 2003: 5) by contesting the very notion of citizenship and what it means to be political (Isin 2009; Nyers 2010). The *Sans Papiers* protestors used church occupations and hunger strikes to protest processes of criminalization and violations of migrants’ rights (Barron et al. 2011; McNevin 2006). The basis of this movement was that migrants from former French colonies have the legal right to live in France because of colonial, economic, and cultural ties (McNevin 2006). Similar protests took place in the U.S. when millions of irregular migrants took the streets in 2006 to demand their regularization and to protest against their disenfranchisement and vulnerability to exploitation. With these pro-regularization movements, “migrants now demand recognition of their social and economic contribution and their pre-existing rights as political subjects.” (McNevin 2007:667). These various movements challenged migration policies and disrupted the logic and legitimacy of the concept of the nation-state, creating new avenues for the formation of trans- and post-national alliances and resistance narratives.

Transnational, political activism is often perceived of as a challenge to the sovereignty of the nation-state. As Thobani (2007: 4) states, the nation-state is increasingly vulnerable to arrivals of “outsiders [who] have routinely been depicted as making unreasonable claims upon the nation,” problematizing issues of spatiality, migrants’ resistance, national sovereignty, citizenship, representation, and political belonging. Migrants’ struggles against deportation and exclusion have been strongly supported by human rights NGOs, humanitarian organizations, and “activists from the antifascist and so called autonomist spectrum of the European Radical Left” (Euskirchen et al, 2009: 1). Anti-deportation and anti-detention protests, often mediatized, draw public attention towards the plight of irregular migrants and refugees who are increasingly framed as “political subjects,” rather than “powerless victims.” The transnational space crafted by these empowered

migrants could be said to include “subaltern” voices, i.e., those who are socially, politically, or culturally outside of hegemonic power structures (Spivak 1988).

In addition to the protests in Italy, irregular migrant communities in France, Germany, and Belgium have held protests with large numbers of demonstrators, including migrants, local left-wing opposition supporters, church-based activists, and members of NGOs and human rights groups. These protests often use targeted, spatial strategies of resistance by occupying certain symbolic spaces, such as churches, e.g., *Chiesa Madre* in Lampedusa, public squares, e.g., *Al Qasba* in Tunis, government headquarters, e.g., *La Municipalité* in Paris. This stratagem draws public attention and global media to their plight and creates and/or builds global support and empathy. Targeted acts of resistance “...temporarily [re-signify] the meaning of [...] space [...] as one of political contention” (Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008: 162). Global popular protests, such as the Occupy Movement, have taken place in cities around the world, and their sit-ins, demonstrations, and other organized campaigns have been strong and effective.

Transnational, border-protest groups have emerged among migrants and refugees. For example, “Lampedusa in Hamburg,” is comprised of migrants and refugees who arrived in Germany from Lampedusa and have claimed their right to stay and move freely in Europe. Another migrant group, *Le Collectif des Tunisiens de Lampedusa*, (The Collective of Tunisians in Lampedusa) was created by those Tunisians who were given a six-month permit to move freely in the Schengen space, following a bilateral agreement between Tunisia and Italy in April 2011. In May 2011, this Collective occupied the municipal building of the 19th Arrondissement in Paris and succeeded in publicizing the need for regularization and freedom of movement. Another success of *Le Collectif des Tunisiens de Lampedusa* was a protest that pushed Italy into

providing more temporary, humanitarian, resident permits for a number of Tunisians who had arrived in April 2011.

i. NGOs' Support, Mobilization, and Public Visibility

During my interviews with informants, most said that their mobilization towards resisting was supported and influenced by Italian activists and local NGOs who were sensitive to their cause and determined to help them. This assistance was significant because it inspired the desire and motivation to protest, shaped their decisions, and laid the ground for more public visibility. Having the organizational and logistical support of local NGOs was crucial for the majority of the study population because many of them did not speak Italian, did not possess the necessary organizing skills, and did not know how to strategically articulate their claims and voice their protest. This latter type of knowledge has roots in political participation and organization; however, most young people in pre-uprising Tunisia lacked political experience because freedom of association was quasi-absent. In fact, any form of political action in Tunisia before 2011 was considered a threat to the government and hence was systematically repressed by the police state of Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali. This repression meant that many youths remained uninvolved in post-uprising politics, including those who escaped to Lampedusa, most of whom remained skeptical about political activism and hesitant to defend their rights. As Ayoub, a 32-year-old man from Al Hansha, Sfax, said,

If we had faith in our politicians or politics as a whole, we would not have escaped to Lampedusa after the *thawra* (revolution). We could have stayed to build our country from anew and use all our efforts to improve Tunisia and make it a great country. Yet, we all decided to come here. Why do you think we did it? The answer is simple. We did it because we know these politicians very well. Ben Ali left, now we have many Ben Alis! [Laugh...] (Interview 05/14/14).

I argue that the lack of experience, apathy towards politics, and distrust of politicians contributed to an inability for some participants to articulate their concerns, strategically voice their issues, and eloquently express them to the public.

ii. Migrant Advocacy Organizations

Migrant organizations, as described by Rosendo and Carita (1993), are vehicles that promote migrants' social integration and stimulate political participation, while, at the same time, becoming a voice that represents the interests of their members in the political field, i.e., a mediator between the migrant community and the political powers of the receiving society. Unfortunately, there are only few Tunisian migrant organizations in Italy. A typical example is a group in the coastal town of Mazara Del Vallo, Sicily that brings the Tunisian migrant community together by reinforcing and preserving homeland culture and traditions through activities such as Ramadan dinners, galas, and culinary events. Organizations that address migrants' rights and other socio-political issues are more frequent in France and Germany, which host much older and more established Tunisian migrant communities. The lack of Tunisian migrant groups in Italy meant that migrants have had to operate under the auspice of local Italian NGOs, such as Askavusa, Caritas and the Italian NGO (ARCI).

Askavusa is a Lampedusan association that advocates for the rights of migrants and promotes a positive image of migrants as energetic agents, rather than passive victims. It organizes different activities including festivals, press conferences, debates, film screenings, and demonstrations. For instance, Askavusa organized a large protest to show support for Tunisian migrants during the visit of Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's far right party in March 2011. The association also strives to raise awareness by disseminating information about migrants' rights and bureaucratic problems such as the tedious asylum procedures. In addition to these activities,

Askavusa also runs a small museum, displaying various objects left by migrants along the shore or brought to Lampedusa by the waves of the Mediterranean. Salah, a 28-year-old, active, Tunisian protestor, told me that the slogans of a recent demonstration were prepared with support from Askavusa, which also helped to translate the texts of banners from Arabic to Italian. I was surprised to learn that most banners, in addition to Italian, had Arabic writings of the slogans used during the 2011 Tunisian uprising such as “*Khobz w’ maa w’ Lampedusa laa* (Bread and water, but no Lampedusa) and “*Awfiya awfiya li arwah al shuhada*” (Loyal, loyal to the souls of the martyrs).

With the help of NGOs and migrant advocacy organizations, a number of Tunisian migrants started to engage with new forms of socio-political expressions that denied the traditional concept of migrants as passive objects of control and conceptualized them as political subjects able to thwart their normative representation and the dynamics of power in place. Since many protesters were irregular migrants who wanted to avoid the police, most acts of resistance, especially those organized outside of detention centers, were peaceful. During manifestations, the demonstrators constantly reminded each other that there should be no violence involved. Some would even repeatedly say out loud, “*Il onf laa wil klem izzayid laa* (No violence and no foul language),” to ensure that their resistance came across in the most peaceful way possible.

A small demonstration of solidarity, in which Salah and I took part denounced the conditions at the Lampedusan reception centers and the overall oppressive policies, stigma, and discrimination against the Tunisian migrant population. Various slogans, in Arabic and Italian, and photographs of missing Tunisian migrants were held by a number of migrants and activists with labels such as “Peace” (Peace), “Migrants rights are human rights,” “Respect for refugees,” and “FRONTEX is Criminal.” The atmosphere was one of celebration with music and dancing as well as food and drinks. Italian protesters sang the antifascist resistance movement song, *Bella Ciao*, while Tunisian

migrants clapped and sang *Mahla Al Gaada Al Mayya...Mahla Al Thawra Al Tounsiyya* (It is beautiful to sit on the sea shore...It is beautiful for the Tunisian uprising to bring us together), a famous song chanted at the *Al Qasba* sit-in after the uprising. The demonstrators also chanted the Tunisian national anthem *Houmat Al Hima* (O defenders of the Homeland), jumping quickly to its famous last refrain written by Tunisia's first poet, Abu Al Qacem Echebbi, which states, "When the people will to live, Destiny must surely respond. Oppression shall then vanish. Fetters are certain to break." The protesters also shouted *Shoghl, hurrya, karama wataniyya* ("Work, freedom, national dignity), a slogan that was very popular during the Tunisian uprising. Clearly, the study participants in this demonstration had acquired a new way of conducting politics, by spontaneously exporting Tunisian slogans into the liminal space of the island and blurring, in a striking way, the boundaries separating the two rims of the Mediterranean. The words, *karama*, *Hourriya*, and even the French word, *Dégage* (Out), were expressions, vocal and in graffiti format, that started to circulate on the island and in other parts of Sicily, defying all geographical and cultural boundaries.

On one Sunday afternoon in July 2014, when I was in Palermo, some 35 Tunisian migrants congregated near the *Teatro Massimo* (Massimo Theatre). They were protesting in collaboration with the Forum *Antirazzista di Palermo*, a local organization, holding banners and cardboard signs with different slogans such as "Migrants rights are human rights," "No human is illegal," "Freedom for all," and "Proud to be Tunisians." The police remained for the entire demonstration but did not stop it. A few local Palermitans and tourists took pictures and videos with their mobile phones. As soon as I got close to the crowd, I was stunned to hear a group of Tunisians who joined the march, shouting, *Ya twansa Maadish khouf...Ben Ali Hrab...Il Mojrim Hrab* (Tunisians, there is no fear...Ben Ali escaped...the criminal escaped)— These extremely famous expressions, filmed by someone's cell phone from an apartment balcony down town

Tunis on January 13th, 2011, were used by a lawyer and activist named Naser Layouni, who went into Habib Bourguiba Avenue, in spite of the curfew, right after Ben Ali gave his last famous speech “*Fhemtkom*” (I have understood you). The expressions uttered by Layouni became very famous, as they were broadcasted by many regional and European televisions and social media networks.

Again, it appeared that the Tunisian uprising with its rioters, heroes, songs, and slogans was resonating beyond North Africa and entering Lampedusa and Sicily, re-configuring their spatial as well as political dimensions. As Salah said to me,

We did not foment a revolution to come here to Lampedusa and remain silent and accept being beaten-up, abused, and humiliated. We have to show our anger and tell the world what we are going through in this *Al Jazeera Al Habs* (prison-island). You know we all call it ‘Guantanamo’ [laugh...] (Interview 06/22/2014).

The word *Habs* (jail), as the disciplinary space of incarceration, was frequently used as a metaphor by Tunisian migrants to refer to Tunisia under Ben Ali and also to the island of Lampedusa. As Kamel, a 22-year-old, told me,

Lampedusa zaada habs, il wahid dima fiha makhnouq (Lampedusa is also, in addition to Ben Ali’s Tunisia, a prison, one is often choking).” Kamel continues “*Ahna awled al thawra*” (We are sons of the revolution) and we are powerful and very strong. Ben Ali and his absolute power were toppled. We have nothing to fear. No one can conquer us except *Allah*” (interview 08/12/2014).

Foucault’s conception of revolts echoes nicely with Kamel’s testimony. According to Foucault, “The impulse through which a single individual, a group, a minority or an entire people says: I will no longer obey, and throws the risk of their life in the face of an authority they consider unjust, seems to me to be something irreducible” (Foucault 1994: 449).

IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrated how migrants either individually or collectively, i.e., with the support of other migrants, NGOs, and social networks of families and friends, could affirm their

“right to claim a right” (Isin 2009:380). During the period, I conducted research, the escalating oppression of, marginalization of, and discrimination against these migrants in Italy and following them to Europe was met with forms of resistance: collective, individual, local, and transnational. In their resistance, the Tunisian migrants I studied used different “weapons of the weak,” e.g., burning finger tips, lip-sewing, hunger strikes, silence, and threats, to disrupt Italian political power structures, oppressive border politics, and the regime of tight mobility-control vis-à-vis migrants and refugees. As the ethnographic evidence shows, Tunisian migrants’ movements and riots in Italy took on a transnational aspect via the use of the internet and social media, thereby influencing and mobilizing migrants’ struggles taking place in other European countries. I demonstrated that the reliance on trans-border social networks, in addition to the support of local contacts in Italy and Tunisia, e.g., friends, family, Italian NGOs and charitable organizations, provided migrants with strategies to navigate their migration journey and to adopt and engage in various resistance strategies. The chapter concludes that old conceptions of migrants as victims and passive objects do not always hold true for the study participants who—to some degree—were able to thwart their normative representation, to unsettle geopolitical power dynamics, and to express themselves as political subjects. Arguably, not all migrants can be so effective because many face obstacles that can hinder resistance and political participation, such as not being able to speak Italian, to organize collectively, i.e., through a lack of time, human potential, material resources, and social capital, to access public space, to overcome political apathy, and to surmount their fear of being deported.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

I. The Study: Research and Results

In this dissertation, I investigated the irregular migrant experience of 60 Tunisian young men who, after their country's uprising in 2011, risked crossing the Mediterranean Sea and entered southern Italy, where they experienced stigmatization, humiliation, and rejection.

i. Research Questions and Strategies

This investigation was undertaken to explore three research questions: 1) how Italy criminalized and dehumanized the irregular migrant such that he became the "Other," and the violence perpetrated against him was permitted and rationalized; 2) how the irregular migrants experienced, negotiated with, and resisted their socially constructed "illegality" and "criminality"; and 3) how trends in anti-migrant violence and oppression within Italy affected the irregular migrants' identity, daily struggles, and survival strategies. To address these questions from a theoretical perspective, I drew from transnational migration scholarship that is particularly influenced by the idea of "permeability" of national boundaries and the resulting economic, socio-cultural, and transnational political exchanges taking place across borders (Appadurai 1991, Schiller and Blanc 1993, Ossman et al. 2007). To find answers to these questions, my research steps were as follows: 1) I examined human rights' abuses perpetrated against the irregular migrants by Italian authorities primarily in police stations and detention centers; 2) I documented of their dehumanization at the hands of both Italian authorities and non-state actors, i.e., employers, media, and the larger public; 3) I collected narratives and oral histories from participants of this study to explore their personal lives, predicaments, feelings, hopes, and fears; and 4) I ethnographically explored the constructions of the Tunisian irregular migrant as the "violent other," "potential criminal," or "hidden terrorist" throughout the stages of a migration journey.

ii. Research Findings

This study focused solely on a particular set of Tunisian irregular migrants; however, I argue that many of its findings are not restricted to this group. Rather, the findings may be applicable to the broad swathe of humanity that has flowed, and continues to flow, from one country to another, driven by wars, internal conflicts, environmental degradation, and ongoing climate change. As such, the study population and this research provide a small but significant window into today's global, transnational migrations.

1. *Al Harqa*: A Transnationally Manufactured Phenomenon

The first, preliminary finding of this study was that the Tunisian migration to Italy is part of a transnationally manufactured phenomenon that is tightly linked to the vast and sprawling nature of the global market with its commodities, ideologies, technologies, and culture. Within this market, Tunisian migration is subject to the law of supply and demand, and Italy's demand for cheap labor is such that an impoverished Tunisian citizen at the edge of the border and within geographical proximity believes that he will find job opportunities once he successfully makes it across the sea. However, despite this need for inexpensive workers, the Italian government took an immediate decision to deport Tunisian migrants back to Tunis. These deportation procedures, as I have noted, are strictly prohibited under international, regional, and domestic human rights and refugee law, and thus constitute a violation of the *non-refoulement* principle. As my research demonstrates, most of these deportation procedures were handled by Italian police and involved harsh treatment, including verbal and physical violence, which often happened at night to avoid retaliation or rebellion.

Due to the massive influx of migrants and the inability of the Italian authorities to deal with the sudden "emergency situation," Tunisian migrants were either captured and put in detention centers, awaiting their asylum applications to be treated, or escaped and were roaming around

Lampedusa and towns of Sicily. Of the latter, some were lucky enough to get jobs, but others less fortunate lived on handouts from charitable organizations and intermittent income from the underground economy or seasonal work.

The data showed that irregular migrants, who had no status but obtained jobs, constituted a cheap and exploitable labor force that was compelled to take any kind of employment under any working and living conditions. Needless to say, these jobs, mostly in the underground economy, paid very low wages and provided no social security or health care benefits. Without any doubt, geographical proximity was the main reason that post-uprising Tunisians chose to flee to Italy. However, other factors also fueled the massive and repeated departures to Lampedusa after the 2011 uprising: 1) the state of lawlessness and chaos in Tunisia during and after the uprising; 2) established social networks in Europe that provided information and incentives; and 3) increased legal and illegal labor opportunities that promised good livelihoods.

2. The Italian/European Response and the “Migration Industry”

The flow of Tunisian migrants into Lampedusa not only pushed the Italian government to engage in collective deportation procedures, but also to adopt stricter policies on migration, visa rules, asylum rights, and most importantly, a tougher border-control system. These measures raised many human rights concerns because they encompassed legal contradictions, such as different visa procedures for different nationalities and choosing to subject those who were captured to arbitrary, violent arrests and inhumane detention conditions while the non-captured were not pursued and thus enjoyed some freedom of movement and a limited access to resources.

Paradoxically, the Italian and Western European migration-control strategies, such as restrictive border-control policies, increased surveillance, and expulsion of migrants, did not discourage the “migration industry,” in general, or the study population, in particular. Instead, these control tactics

“induced shifts in the human traffic,” thereby creating new migrant routes to Europe and innovative methods of irregular entry. (Andreas 2012:94). The many forms and degrees of increasing mobilities are clearly proof of the failure of Italy and the EU to effectively control population, territory, and borders. These mobilities take place each day, turning human smuggling into a very lucrative business that functions according to the same rules as the global market. As Massey et al. aptly put it, the strong demand for cheap global labor creates “a lucrative economic niche for entrepreneurs and institutions dedicated to promoting international movement for profit, yielding a black market in migration” (1993:450).



Fig 14. The various migration routes to Lampedusa and Sicily

For Tunisians, Italy’s restrictive immigration laws and harsh border policies were not an overwhelming obstacle. Rather, they engendered a greater desire to infiltrate *Lorop*²⁸ and encouraged greater influxes of Tunisian irregular migrants. The cat-and-mouse game between the Italian state and the Tunisian “intruders” resulted in an unprecedented increase in migrants’ dependence on criminal networks of human smuggling that operated from Tunisia and, more recently, Libya. These networks are well organized, seek out new routes, and rely on more

²⁸ *Lorop* is the French transformation of the word *l’Europe* used in the Tunisian vernacular to refer to Europe

professional, well-equipped human smugglers in an attempt to circumvent surveillance. As a result, they have a high level of competence in finding more effective means of transpiercing borders.

3. Populist Rhetoric and the “Other”

As immigration laws grew more oppressive, the rhetoric around migration was also changing in Europe. Migrants, who had once been important contributors to the economies of European countries, became a “security issue,” i.e., a threat to the cultural, economic, and physical safety of European societies. Italy was no exception, and the irregular migration from Tunisia to Italy became increasingly associated with criminality, socio-economic problems, cultural deprivation, and most recently, with terrorism. I demonstrated that the Italian populist discourse and the security argument were combined with the nationalist, xenophobic, and racist discourse that resulted in exclusion but, more importantly, in the “criminalization” of the Tunisian migrant as “Other.” According to Italian migration laws, irregular migrants were “illegal immigrants,” who had committed a crime by their “illegal” entry and stay in the Italian territory. The Italian populist agenda sought to obtain a consensus about the Tunisians through widespread, emotional arguments based on an opposition between “us” and the “others” that was grounded in an ethno-national idea of identity. Thus the ethnographic evidence showed the Italian people were afraid of Tunisian migrants because they changed, or would change, the cultural, socio-political, and economic landscape.

Accordingly, study participants became the target of many different, threat-fueling public discourses through both populist speeches and inflated media rhetoric and imagery. Security rhetoric was at the core of Italian national politics and has been successful, thus far, in the perpetuation of xenophobic discourses that evoke migration as a national threat. This populist rhetoric was employed both by extreme right political parties, such as the *Lega Nord*, who

wanted to gain electoral consensus, and the media, who reported events involving migrants in sensationalist ways to improve their ratings. In fact, current Italian migration policies seem to have been shaped more by populist rhetoric and ideologies than by the type of thoughtful and dispassionate debate that could have resulted in rational, realistic migration policies aimed at controlling irregular migration.

The criminalization of migration through the transformation of cultural and religious differences into a “security threat” has taken much of its authority from the homogenizing and essentializing discourses of culture and identity. Thus popular rhetoric, using culturalist and religious discourses, tries to establish a dialectical and hostile relationship between “native Italians” and “foreign Tunisian migrants.” Populist and right wing politicians as well as conservative sections of the Italian society construct their arguments on this essentialized and “racialized” binary alignment of people. By doing so, they can link issues such as the erosion of national identity, cultural values, tradition, and amorality to the threatening existence of the irregular migrant population within their society.

This criminalizing discourse becomes not only mainstream, but also more legal and thus dangerous for migrants, through national legislative texts that officially associate irregular migration with illegality, crime, and violence. When this occurred, the ideologies of power and the Italian nation-state apparatus further subordinated the Tunisian migrant of this study by putting him into a normalized status of potential criminality. Interestingly, in a symbolic visit to Lampedusa on Monday, June 8, 2013, Pope Francis I made a powerful statement in which he criticized Italy’s treatment of Tunisian migrants as “criminals” and emphasized the dynamics of cooperation and development. He endorsed an “integrated perspective” in dealing with migrants and stated that

Italy should be capable of seeing and valuing migrants' potential, rather than viewing them "as a problem to be confronted and resolved" (Official Vatican Network).

4. Living in the Shadow of Islamophobia

Throughout the dissertation, I described how members of the study population were trapped in their status of irregularity, with no power to change it. The majority of the participants lived in constant fear of confrontations with Italian authorities that so compromised their mobility that some did not even look for jobs. This fear became internalized, impacting their well-being and shaping their social interactions and everyday life. For example, some of them even resisted taking the bus, preferring to walk tens of kilometers because they could not produce a residence permit to validate their "legality."²⁹ The deportable nature of irregular migrants made my study population nothing less than a disposable entity in the hands of the Italian authorities. For them, "the possibility of removal [...] casts a long, dark shadow over their daily lives, threatening at any moment to take away from them the little they have gained by residence in the host country and their hopes for the future" (Gibney and Hansen 2003: 43).

The migration debate in Italy and Europe today is primarily framed in terms of the socio-economic, political, and cultural stability of European nation-states, in which the Muslim migrant has become reified as the enemy who threatens terrorism. The already prevalent discriminatory actions and rhetoric feed into a xenophobic and "criminalizing" attitude. In analyzing Islamophobia, I was motivated, less by the challenge of determining its connotations, than by an effort to recognize its politicized aspect and variability. Throughout the analysis, I sought to identify ways in which the image of the Tunisian migrant as a "threat" was constructed and propagated, depicting its function as a form of cultural racism or, to use Balibar's (1991)

²⁹ Under Bossi/Fini law, ticket inspectors who catch an irregular migrant without a valid ticket can be rewarded with €50.

expression, “racism without race.” In the process, I maintained that the highly politicized, migratory debates, in connection with Islamophobia, were used by a number of far right politicians to mask the real foundation of Italy’s failure to address its socio-economic, political, financial, and cultural problems.

My ultimate goal was to demonstrate what it was like for the study population to live in the shadow of Islamophobia. First, I put the concept into anthropological and ethnographic, socio-cultural categories to better understand its complex relation with the processes of securitization, stigmatization, and criminalization. I then determined that there was hardly any culture of integration in Italy; rather, the national emphasis was on migrant assimilation that required a complete, public rupture with their background, e.g., hiding Muslim visibility. As Meher, a 32-year-old man, eloquently explained,

There is no way anyone would show any racist attitude or make a derogatory comment on my being Muslim. *Yakhi maktoub ala jbini “Muslim”* (Is it written on my forehead that I am Muslim)? There is nothing about me that says “I am Muslim.” I could even look Sicilian. And, if they are racists, I have a big mouth. I can easily stop them and turn the attack against them, but in a very calm and peaceful way. But, I have to learn more Italian. And I will [sigh...] (Interview 09/12/2014).

However, research showed that, although Islamophobic attitudes and negative, derogatory representations of Muslims were demeaning and dehumanizing for study participants, they also functioned as a starting point for various types of resistance strategies and adaptation skills. Many participants demonstrated an ability to act as counter-hegemonic agents of social change either individually or in a collective—resistance that played a significant role in exposing the myriad forms of exploitation and human rights abuse they were experiencing.

5. Migrant Resistance and Success

In the last part of the dissertation, I highlighted the importance of viewing the study participants as “transmigrants” because treating them as “victims,” “criminals,” or “objects” overlooked the

concrete experiences of their everyday life and the sophisticated agency and heroic attitudes they displayed throughout their challenging migration experience. In particular, I emphasized the concepts of “transnationalism from below,” “weapons of the weak,” and “social networks,” which allow for a more contextualized, historicized, and in-depth way to comprehend, on one hand, participants’ mundane activities and daily struggles and, on the other, the processes affecting power relations, cultural, and economic interactions, and more specifically, socio-political organizing within and across borders.

By analyzing social network theory, and using some ethnographic examples, I validated that, despite the restrictive policies of the Italian state to limit mobilities, transnationalism through its various resources, i.e., human, financial, ideological, and symbolic, will constantly encourage, sustain, and maintain migrant flows, i.e., lubricate the mobility engine. Some of these resources have empowered the post-uprising Tunisian migrant community by providing them with tools to build social capital within their networks, to creatively navigate their migration journey, and to craft survival mechanisms that resist myriad forms of social violence, exclusion, and alienation, whether in detention centers or out in the society. Unfortunately, space did not allow me to discuss, in-depth, situations in which social networks failed or ceased to exist. However, arguably, the social network model is not always a steady and self-perpetuating process because it is shaped by multiple macro-geopolitical and economic forces, as well as international and national migration policies over which individuals have little or no control.

Using the concept of “weapons of the weak,” I was able to describe the resistance acts of study participants as a set of socio-political processes that aimed to disrupt and unsettle the Italian, hegemonic, border narrative. Such resistance, when collectively enacted, enabled them to become more politically active, transforming the political space by forging alliances with

NGOS and Italian/trans-border grassroots groups to voice their struggle and claim their rights. The Tunisian migrants in this study became more empowered by entering new sites of struggle where they were able to “assert agency in navigating, negotiating, and resisting border controls” (Rygel 2011: 13). Degrading detention procedures and control of migrant bodies was often circumvented by migrants in resilient and creative ways during encounters with the Italian authorities.

Based on the ethnographic findings, I contended that the Tunisians’ collective departures and mass landings in Lampedusa, i.e., their creation of what was referred to as the “North African emergency,” could be viewed an enactment of their freedom of movement. Freedom, along with other human rights, had been crushed during the 23-year rule of Ben Ali, and the idea of it as “a freedom in everything” entered into slogans during the 2011 popular protests. One slogan, *Choghl/khobz, hourriya, karama wataniyya* (Work/bread, freedom, national dignity) had been brought into Italy, and I heard it recycled in Lampedusa. The study population perceived their *harqa* to Lampedusa to be an enactment of this freedom, and they viewed it as one of their basic rights as human beings. As Bigo notes, “under liberal governmentality, mobility is translated into a discourse of freedom of circulation, which reframes freedom as moving without being stopped [...] freedom has often been reduced to freedom of movement” (Bigo, 2010:31).

II. Research Significance

Despite the growing empirical and theoretical research conducted on irregular migration, there remains a large gap in the current anthropological literature on Tunisian migration to Italy and to Europe as a whole. Hence, this study is “a pioneering project” because it deals with an extremely under-represented group in the study of transnational migration and expands the study of transnational movements to countries, such as Tunisia, that have long been understudied and

overlooked in the larger migration literature. Secondly, by examining the human rights abuses of irregular Tunisian migrants in a post-uprising context, this project attempts to engender more comprehensive and cross-cultural approaches to the study of irregular migration as a whole. Thirdly, transnational migration is a relatively new phenomenon, and the issues it raises can, in general, foster new debates and break new analytical ground. By examining how post-uprising Tunisian migrants collectively reacted to their human rights violations, this project builds on recent efforts to engage in more comprehensive methodological and theoretical debates on transnational migration. In sum, this type of research is not only timely and necessary, but is also invaluable as a fresh anthropological contribution to the ongoing policy and legislative debates in the field of transnational migration, human rights, and social movements.

III. Future Research

One aspect of the irregular migrant experience that has not been investigated by scholars is the post-deportation return to the homeland. For both the study participants, their families, and their fellow citizens, deportation was considered a disastrous calamity. As Jameliddine said, “When you get deported back home, it is *akbar kartha* (this is the biggest tragedy).” Another young man told me,

Now I am here, and *tihchaali* (a pejorative word with sexual connotation meaning ‘I was trapped already’), and I can never go back to Tunisia. It will never ever happen. What do you want them to say? That I failed? That I am *bidoun* (a loser) ...that I am not good enough? That will never happen, I am telling you. I am able to endure more than racism and oppression and remain here until I start my life as a human being.” (Interview 07/13/2014).

However, a significant number of deportees from Italy did return to Tunisia, and the ones that I spoke to confessed to feelings of extreme levels of guilt, shame, and stigma because they failed in their migration project. Moreover, their deportation had increased their vulnerability

and marginalization in Tunisia, making their re-adaptation difficult. According to these interviewees, they had become useless, social entities: an out-group. As Hamadi told me,

Everyone here in Hay Ettadhamen perceives us to be the source of all ills in the township. We are continuously pushed to the fringes of society, and everyone avoids talking to us. We are often referred to as *Ghabbara* (pejorative term for people selling cocaine) and no one trusts us (Interview 09/2013).

There is a saying in Tunisia that goes, *ghaab wash jaab?* (He was absent, now what has he brought?), and unfortunately, most deportees returned empty-handed.

Clearly, the Tunisian migrants who returned, either as deportees or for some voluntarily, had the burden of re-integrating in an unwelcoming social environment; they were “failures,” suspicious individuals, and *m’jarrma* (criminals). The shame of deportation and the pejorative labels attached to them, such as *ghabbarat Italia* (the drug dealers of Italy) and *l’expulsé* (the deportee), negatively impacted their well-being, self-esteem, and sense of belonging. Indeed, the stigma, precariousness, alienation, and social exclusion instilled in them a desire to re-migrate and re-launch their “rite of passage,” i.e., migration. As Massey puts it, “For young men, and in many settings young women as well, migration becomes a rite of passage, and those who do not attempt to elevate their status through international movements are considered lazy, unenterprising, and undesirable” (Massey et al.1993:452-453). As a matter of fact, a number of the study participants that I interviewed in Sicily had come back to Italy after one or multiple deportations.

Only a few studies exist on what happens to migrants’ post-deportation and the challenges they face in their re-adjustment and re-integration in the socio-economic fabric of their homeland. Hence, the post-deportation experience could be the topic of future ethnographic research, which would have the potential of critically addressing the impacts of deportation on migrants, their families, and the larger social environment.

Future empirical research on this post-deportation topic could be enriched by the analysis of the plethora of cultural production pertaining to irregular migration in the fields of literature, poetry, theatre, film, street art, song, memoir, etc. This research could be grounded within a framework where Tunisian irregular migrants could be either cultural producers or consumers, or both. This particular area, despite its significance, was beyond the scope of my dissertation. However, to close this manuscript, I will use a rap song by Balti, one of Tunisia's best-known rappers, to illustrate such agenda. Balti's song titled "*Clandestino*" demonstrates that music can play a significant and creative role in providing migrants with a sense of identity, by illustrating their stories of displacement, evoking the larger socio-cultural and political underpinnings of the overall *harqa* phenomenon.

***Clandestino* - كلاندستينو³⁰
Balti Ft. Master Sina**

Clandestino
Perché senza soggiorno
Perché senza la mamma
Perché senza ritorno
Clandestino

³⁰ Clandestino is the term used by Italians to refer to irregular migrants. In my dissertation I did not use the term 'clandestine' but 'irregular' and I provided an explanation for my choice in chapter one.

Io voglio diventare ricco
Facendo contento la
mamma
Senza cadere a picco
 صاك ا دو على ضهرك تمشي من
 GPS غير
 CRS هايم في الكياس خايف مل
 ولاد بلادك برشة نفسي لا يرحم من
 مات
 روعي روعي لا تقلي بن عمي مل
 بلاد
 رضيت بالغربة و البرد الوحش و
 لا الاذى
 تقيق على صوت الكنيسة متوحش
 الأذان
 في الصباح دهان إبابسوس
 ألبيريان
 سكرة عيني كان تحلم
 ببلاصة للطليلان
 قالو جاي من البلاد قالو عليك بلیدار
 مايكلش الحلوف اما يخمم كي
 الكفار
 اللغة عربيه والديكور فرنسيس
 تحب تجيب طواك جيب الدينار
 بالدوفيس
 كلمني علي الزيرو سيس تو نقولك
 وكري وكري
 عربي هايم بين حيوط بلادي
 العسكري
Clandestino
Perché senza soggiorno
Perché senza la
mamma
Perché senza
ritorno
Clandestino
 الباطو فوق بالبانويلا
Non devo dire grazie a
nessuno
Perché la mia vita l'ho

[المقطع الأول بلطي]
 مخك في البلاد و قلبك في شون
 نزيليزاي
fatta da solo
E quando da bimbo tu
aspettavi il regalo
Io ero fuori a raccogliere
il denaro
Clandestino
Perché senza soggiorno
Perché senza la mamma
Perché senza ritorno
Clandestino
Io voglio diventare ricco
Facendo contento la
mamma
Senza cadere a picco
Non devo dire grazie a
nessuno
Perché la mia vita l'ho
fatta da solo
E quando da bimbo tu
aspettavi il regalo
Io voglio diventare ricco
Facendo contento la
mamma
Senza cadere a picco
 [ماستر سينا المقطع الثاني]
Sono venuto in Italia
venuto da piccolo
Arabo in Italia quello che
dicono
Scappato dal paese su una
barca
 كيفاش بلادي ولاد عينايا على شفت
 غارقا

رايح بين الاوراق و بين الحومة
 ديفيزاي
C'è chi s'è salvato chi è
morto
Ki è negato senza ritorno
Buongiorno l'italia, ciao la
tunisia
 ماتراك من و بلاد مل هارب
 البوليسيا
Mi sono arrangiato ho
sbagliato
Mi hanno taggato per
maleducato
Io sono cresciuto ho
pagato
 اليوم نروح لامي
Clandestino
Perché senza soggiorno
Perché senza la mamma
Perché senza ritorno
Clandestino
Io voglio diventare ricco
Facendo contento la
mamma
Senza cadere a picco
Pensami, pensami,
pensami
Che io penso a te..

My Own Translation of
'Clandestino' from
Tunisian and Italian to
English:

Clandestine...

Because without a
*soggiorno*³¹
 Because without my
 mother
 Because without return
 Clandestine...
 I want to become rich
 I want to make my mother
 happy
 Without staggering

Your brain is at the *bled*³²
 and your heart is at the
 Champs Elysees
 Divided – between your
 documents and the
 neighborhood
 Back-bag on your
 shoulders, walking without
 GPS
 Wandering in the streets
 afraid of the Police
 Many Tunisians around,
 but no one offers to help
 Each one to himself, even
 my own cousins
 I accept my homesickness
 and the cold weather,
 better alone than in bad
 company
 You wake up to the
 Church's bells missing the
*Adhan*³³
 In the morning a painter, at
 an Algerian company
 I close my eyes dreaming
 about a ticket to Italy

³¹ The residence permit in Italian.

³² *Bled* is the Tunisian term for Home.

³³ The call to prayer.

They said he comes from
 the bled. They said he is a
 bastard
 He does not eat pork, but
 he thinks like the 'infidels'

The language is Arabic,
 the *décor* is French
 You want to convert the
 Dinar into foreign currency
 Call me at the 06³⁴ and I
 will tell you 'there is no
 place like home'
 An Arab idle between the
 walls of my *Akri*³⁵ country

Clandestine ...
 Because without a
soggiorno
 Because without my
 mother
 Because without return
 Clandestine ...
 I want to become rich
 I want to make my mother
 happy
 Without staggering
 I have no thanks due to
 anyone
 Coz I am the one who
 crafted my own life
 When you were a child
 waiting for gifts
 I was outside collecting
 dinars³⁶
 I came to Italy when I was
 little
 In Italy, they say 'The
 Arab escaped on a boat'

³⁴ The cell- telephone code for Paris.

³⁵ *Akri* an old term referring to 'colonizing' France.

³⁶ Tunisian currency.

I saw my own fellow
 Tunisians drowning
 There are those who got
 rescued and others who
 died
 There are those who can
 never return
 Good morning Italy, bye
 bye Tunisia
 Fleeing the bled and the
 police baton

I tried to fix things, but
 made many mistakes
 They said I am a thug
 I grew up and paid the
 price
 I will return to my mother
 with a car
 I have no thanks due to
 anyone
 Coz I am the one who
 crafted my own life
 When you were a child
 waiting for gifts
 I was outside collecting
 dinars

Think of me...I will think
 of you...
 Clandestine ...

Because without a
soggiorno
 Because without my
 mother

Because without return
 Clandestine ...
 I want to become rich
 I want to make my mother
 happy...

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abidi, Ridha
2003 L'Immigration Dans la Zone du Grand Sfax (Migration in Sfax). MA Thesis, University of Sousse.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila
1991 Writing Against Culture. *In* Recapturing Anthropology Working in the in the Present. Richard G. Fox, ed, pp. 137-162. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Attiya, Ahmad
2010 Explanation is Not the Point: South Asian Migrant Domestic Workers' Newfound Islamic Pieties in Kuwait, *Asian and Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 11(3-4), 293-310. Retrieved from https://anthropology.columbian.gwu.edu/sites/anthropology.columbian.gwu.edu/files/downloads/Ahmad_Explanation_1.pdf
- Akesson, Lisa et al.
2010 Mobility, Moralities and Motherhood: Navigating the Contingencies of Cape Verdean lives, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(2), 237-60. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1369183X.2012.646420>
- Alexander, M. Ervin.
2000 *Applied Anthropology: Tools and Perspectives for Contemporary Practice*, pp. 154-180. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Allen, Chris
2013 *Islamophobia*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.
- Allen, Christopher and Nielson Jorgen
2002 Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September. Vienna. http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/199-Synthesis-report_en.pdf
- Allievi, Stefano
2003 *Islam Italiano. Viaggio Nella Seconda Religione del Paese*. Torino: Einaudi.
- Altheide, David
2006 *Terrorism and the Politics of Fear*. Lanham, U.K.: Rowan and Littlefield.
- Amelina, Anna and Thomas Faist
2008 Turkish Migrant Associations in Germany: Between Integration Pressure and Transnational Linkages, *Pratiques Transnationales. Mobilite et Territorialites*, 24(2), 91-120.

- Amnesty International
2011 Italy Urged to Respect Rights as Thousands of Migrants and Asylum Seekers Leave Tunisia. Amnesty International Report. [Online]. Available at <http://www.amnesty.org.au/news/comments/24854/>
- Anderson, Benedict
1991 *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
- Andreas, Peter
2015 *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide*. 2nd Edition Cornell University Press.
- Andrijasevic, Rutvica and Bridget Anderson
2009 Anti-Trafficking Campaigns: Decent? Honest? Truthful? *Feminist Review*, 92(1), 51–155.
- Anthias, Floya and Yuval-Davis, Nira
1994 *Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Color, and Class and the Antiracist Struggle*. New York: Routledge.
- Appadurai, Arjun
1991 Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology. *In* Richard G. Fox, ed., *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Aradau, Claudia and Huysmans Jeff
2009 Mobilizing (Global) Democracy: A Political Reading of Mobility between Universal Rights and the Mob. *Journal of International Studies*, 37(3), 583-604.
- Arango, Joaquin
2004 Theories of International Migration. *In* D. Joly (ed.), *International Migration and the New Millennium*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Bailey, Kenneth
1994 *Methods of Social Research*, Fourth Edition, New York: The Free Press.
- Baldwin-Edwards, M. and Kraler, A.
2009 REGINE Regularisations in Europe. Study on Practices in the Area of Regularisation of Illegally Staying Third-country Nationals in the Member States of the EU. Vienna, ICMPD (International Centre for Migration Policy Development).
- Balibar, Etienne and Immanuel Wallerstein
1991 *Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, London and New York: Verso.

- Balibar, Etienne
2007 Is There a Neo-racism? *In* Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities, by Etienne Balibar and Emmanuel Wallerstein (London: Verso, 1991).
- Banakar, Reza
2008 The Politics of Legal Culture. *The Nordic Journal of Law and Justice*, 31(4), 37–60.
Retrieved from <http://lawexplores.com/the-politics-of-legal-cultures/>
- Barron, Pierre, Anne Bory, Sébastien Chauvin, Nicolas Jounin, and Lucie Tourette
2011 On Bosse Ici, on Reste Ici ! La Grève des Sans-papiers : Une Aventure Inédite. Paris.
- Basch Linda, Glick Schiller Nina and Szanton Blanc C.
1994 Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States. London: Gordon and Breach.
- Beck, Ulrich
2000 The Cosmopolitan Perspective: Sociology of the Second Age of Modernity. *British Journal of Sociology*, 51(1), 79–105.
- Behdad, Ali
1998 Ins and Outs: Producing Delinquency at the Border. *Aztlan: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, 23(1), 103-14.
- Benhabib, Seyla
2001 Transformation of Citizenship. Dilemmas of the Nation-State in an Era of Globalization, the Spinoza Lectures (Amsterdam: Van Gorcum).
- Bensalah, Nouzha
1994 Familles Turques et Maghrébines Aujourd'hui : Evolution dans les Espaces d'Origine et d'Immigration. Maisonneuve et Larose.
- Bertocchi, Graziella and Chiara Strozzi
2010 L'Evoluzione Della Leggi Sulla Cittadinanza : Una Prospettiva Globale. [Online]. Available at http://morgana.unimore.it/bertocchi_graziella/papers/RPSweb.pdf
- Bhabha, Homi K.
1990 The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha. *In* J. Rutherford (Ed.), Identity, Community, Culture, Difference. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Bigo, Didier and Elspeth Guild
2005 Policing at a Distance: Schengen Visa Policies. *In* Didier Bigo & Elspeth Guild (Eds.): Controlling Frontiers. Free Movement into and within Europe. Aldershot: Ashgate.

- Bigo, Didier
2010 Freedom and Speed in Enlarged Borderzones. *In the Contested Politics of Mobility. Border zones and Irregularity*, edited by V. Squire, Routledge.
- Biorcio, Roberto
1999 La Lega Nord e la Transizione Italiana. *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*, aprile (1), 55-88.
- Bloch, Alice
2013 The Labour Market Experiences and Strategies of Young Undocumented Migrants. *Work, Employment and Society*, 27(2), 272-87.
- Bloch, Alice and Lisa Schuster
2005 At the Extremes of Exclusion: Deportation, Detention and Dispersal. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(3), 491-512.
- Bloch, Alice, Nando Sigona and Roger Zetter
2011 Migration Routes and Strategies of Young Undocumented Migrants in England: A Qualitative Perspective. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(8), 1286-1302.
- Bogdan, Robert C., and Sari Knopp Biklen
1992 *Qualitative Research for Education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bojadzije, Manuela and Serhat Karakayali
2010 Recuperating the Sideshows of Capitalism: The Autonomy of Migration Today. *E-Flux Journal*, 17. Retrieved from <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/recuperating-the-sideshows-of-capitalism-the-autonomy-of-migration-today>.
- Bonifazi, Corrado
2000 European Migration Policy: Questions from Italy. *In* Russel King, Gabriela Lazaridis et Charalambos Tsardanidis (eds.) *Eldorado or Fortress? Migration in Southern Europe*, London: MacMillan.
- Boswell, Christina
2003 *European Migration Policies in Flux: Changing Patterns of Inclusion and Exclusion*. Oxford, Blackwell.
- Bosniak, Linda
2000 Citizenship Denationalized. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 7(2), 447-509.
- Boubakri, Hassan
2013 Revolution and International Migration in Tunisia. Migration Policy Centre (MPC) Research Report 2013/14, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domen.
<http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/MPC-RR-2013-04.pdf>

- Bourdieu, Pierre
1985 The Forms of Capital. *In Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. JG Richardson. New York: Greenwood.
- Brettell, B. Caroline
2000 Theorizing Migration in Anthropology: The Social Construction of Networks, Identities, Communities and Globalscapes. *In Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines* Ed by: Caroline B. Brettell and James F. Hollifield, New York: Routledge.
- Brinkley, Alan
2003 A Familiar Story: Lessons from Past Assaults on Freedom, pp 23-46. *In the War on Our Freedom: Civil Liberties in an Age of Terrorism*, Ed. New York, NY: PublicAffairs
- Brochmann, Grete and Tomas Hammer
1999 Mechanisms of Immigration Control: A Comparative Analysis of European Regulation Policies. Oxford/New York, Berg.
- Broeders, Dennis and Godfried Engbersen
2007 The Fight against Illegal Migration: Identification Policies and Immigrants' Counterstrategies. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 50(12), 1592-1609.
- Cabot, Heath
2012 The Governance of Things: Documenting Limbo in the Greek Asylum Procedure. *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, 35(1), 11-29. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1555-2934.2012.01177.x/pdf>
- Calavita, Kitty
2005 *Immigrants at the Margins*. Cambridge University Press.
- Campesi, Giuseppe
2011 Arab Revolts and the Crisis of the European Border Regime: Manufacturing the Emergency in the Lampedusa Crisis. Discussion Paper for the European University Institute Migration Working Group Seminar, 25 May. <http://www.docfoc.com/giuseppe-campesi-the-arab-spring-and-the-crisis-of-the-european-border-regime>
- Candea, Matei
2009 Arbitrary Locations: In Defense of the Bounded Field-Site. *In Mark-Anthony Falzon (Ed.), Multi-Sited Ethnography. Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research* (pp.25-47). London: Ashgate.
- Carchedi, Francesco
1992 I Tunisini, in Mottura, G. (ed). *L'Arcipelago I immigrazione: Catteristiche e Modelli Migratori dei Lavoratori Stranieri in Italia*, Rome: Ediese.

- Cardia, Carlo
2011 Immigrazione e Multiculturalità, *Justitia*, vol. 27.
- Carita, Christina and Vasco Rosendo
1993 Associativismo cabo-verdiano em Portugal. Estudo de caso da Associação Cabo-verdiana em Lisboa. *Sociologia - Problemas e Práticas*, 13.
- Castells, Manuel
1996 *The Rise of Network Society*. Oxford and Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers.
- Chambers, Robert
1995 Poverty and Livelihoods: Whose Reality Counts? An Overview Paper prepared for the Stockholm Roundtable on Global Change 22-24 July 1994. Brighton, England: Institute of Development Studies. [Online]. Available at <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/579/rc441.pdf?sequence=1>
- Chavez, Leo R.
1991 Outside the Imagined Community: Undocumented Settlers and Experiences of Incorporation. *American Ethnologist*, 18(2), 257-78.
- Cheli, Enzo
2010 Diritti Umani Degli Immigrati : Profili Costituzionali e Internazionali. In Pisillo Mazzeschi, R., Pustorino, P. and Viviani, A. (eds.), *Diritti Umani Degli Immigrati – Tutela Della Famiglia e Dei Minori*, Napoli : Editoriale Scientifica.
- Clayton, John
2009 Thinking Spatially: Towards and Everyday Understanding of Interethnic Relations. *Social and Cultural Geography*, 10(4), 481-498.
- Clifford, James
1986 Introduction: Partial Truths. In Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. E. (Eds.), *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, pp. 1–26. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Cohen, Robin
1996 Diasporas and the Nation-state: from Victims to Challengers', *International Affairs*, 72(3), 507-20.
- Cohen, Stanley
1972 *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and the Rockers*, London: MacGibbon and Kee.

- Collins, Francis Leo
2012 Transnational Mobilities and Urban Spatialities: Notes from the AsiaPacific. *Progress in Human Geography*, 36(3), 316-35.
- Collyer, Michael
2006 Migrants, Migration and the Security Paradigm: Constraints and Opportunities. *Mediterranean Politics*, 11(2), 255-270.
- Consiglio dei Ministri
2011 Decreto Del Presidente Del Consiglio Dei Ministri 12 febbraio, 2011, Dichiarazione dello Stato di Emergenza Humanitaria nel Territorio Nazionale in Relazione all'Eccezionale Afflusso di Cittadini Appartenenti ai Paesi del Nord Africa, (11A02242). [Online]. Available at http://www.governo.it/GovernoInforma/Dossier/ordinanza_pcm_immigrazione/dichiarazione_12febbraio2011.pdf
- Cornelius, Wayne, Takeyuki Tsuda, Philip L. Martin and James Hollifield
2004 *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective* (2nd Ed.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Corriere della Sera
2002 Bossi : Mobilitero i Popoli Contro L'Europa Stalinista. *Corriere della Sera*. 01 March 2002.
- Coutin, Susan Bibler
2003 Borderlands, Illegality and the Spaces of Non-existence. *In* Perry, Richard Warren and Bill Maurer (eds) *Globalization Under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 171-202.
- Crumley, Bruce
2011 Schengen Revision: The Backstory to Tightening Europe's Borders. *Times*, May 11, 2011. [Online]. Available at <http://world.time.com/2011/04/26/sarkozyand-berlusconi-want-to-scrap-europes-open-borders>
- Cuttitta, Paolo
2014 Borderizing' the Island Setting and Narratives of the Lampedusa 'Border Play'. *International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 13(2), 196-219.
Retrieved from <https://f.hypotheses.org/wpcontent/blogs.dir/235/files/2014/06/CuttittaACME2014.pdf>
- 2014 From the Cap Anamur to Mare Nostrum. Humanitarianism and Migration Controls at the EU's Maritime Borders. *In* C. Matera, A. Taylor (Ed.), *the Common European Asylum System and Human Rights: Enhancing Protection in Times of Emergencies* (pp.

21-37). Den Haag: Asser Institute. [Online]. Available at http://www.asser.nl/media/2485/cleer14-7_web.pdf

Cvajner, Martina and Giuseppe Sciortino

2009 Dal Mediterraneo al Baltico? Il Cambiamento nei Sistemi Migratori Italiani, in R. Catanzaro & G. Sciortino (eds.), *La Fatica di Cambiare: Rapporto sulla Società Italiana*, 23-53. Bologna: Il Mulino.

D'Emilio, Frances

2011 Italy Fears Tunisian Migrants May Include Terrorists. *The Seattle Times*, Feb 12. [Online]. Available at <http://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/italy-fears-tunisian-migrants-may-include-terrorists/>

Daly, Faycal

2001 The Double Passage: Tunisian Migration to the South and North of Italy. In *The Mediterranean Passage: Migration and New Cultural Encounters in Southern Europe*, King R (ed.). Liverpool University Press: Liverpool.

De Genova, Nicholas

2005 Working the Boundaries: Race, Space, and “Illegality” in Mexican Chicago.

2002 Migrant ‘Illegality’ and Deportability in Everyday Life. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 3, 419-747.

De Haas, Hein

2001 Migration and Agricultural Transformations in the Oases of Morocco and Tunisia. Utrecht: KNAG

2005 International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts. *Third World Quarterly*, 26(8), 1269-1284. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01436590500336757>

2008 North-African Migration Systems: Evolution, Transformations and Development Linkages. In Castles, S. & R Delgado Wise (Eds.), *Migration and Development: Perspectives from the South*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration. [Online]. Available at <https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/publications/wp-06-07>

2010 Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective. *International Migration Review*, 44(1), 1-41. Retrieved from <https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/publications/wp-09-08>

Delvino, Nicola and Sarah Spencer

2014 Irregular Migrants in Italy: Law and Policy on Entitlements to Services. ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) University of Oxford September 2014. [Online]. Available at https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/media/PR-2014-Irregular_Migrants_Italy.pdf

- Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari
2004 *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Continuum.
- Der Spiegel
2011 Libyan Crisis: Italy Warns of a New Wave of Immigrants to Europe. Der Spiegel, February 24. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/libyan-crisis-italy-warns-of-a-new-wave-of-immigrants-to-europe-a-747459.html>
- Di Martino, Alberto, Francesca Biondi Dal Monte, Ilaria Boiano and Rosa Raffaelli
2013 *The Criminalization of Irregular Immigration: Law and Practice in Italy*. Pisa: University Press, 2013. [Online]. Available at <http://www.wiss-ab.dirpolis.sssup.it/files/2013/05/Libro-dirpolis-1.pdf>
- Driessen, Henk
1991 *On the Spanish Moroccan Frontier: A study in Ritual, Power and Ethnicity*. Berg Publishers.
- Düvell, Franck
2006 *Crossing the Fringes of Europe: Transit Migration in the EU's Neighborhood*. Working Paper 06-33. Centre on Migration, Policy and Society: Oxford.
https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/2006/wp-2006-033-duvell_fringe_migration/

2006 *Irregular migration in Europe beyond control?* Palgrave Macmillan. Houndsmills
- Ellis, Carolyn and Arthur Bochner
1996 *Composing Ethnography: Alternative Forms of Qualitative Writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Esposito John and Ibrahim Kalin
2011 *Islamophobia: The Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century*. Oxford University Press.
- Euskirchen, Markus, Henrik Lebuhn and Gene Ray
2007 *From Borderline to Borderland: The Changing European Border Regime*. Monthly Review, an Independent Socialist Magazine, 59(6). Retrieved from <http://monthlyreview.org/2007/11/01/from-borderline-to-borderland-the-changing-european-border-regime/>
- Faini, Riccardo and Alessandra Venturini
1994 *Migration and Growth: The Experience of Southern Europe*. London: CEPR Discussion Paper No. 964. [Online]. Available at <https://ideas.repec.org/p/cpr/ceprdp/964.html>

- Faiola, Anthrony
 2014 Amid Flood of Refugees to Europe, Italy Opens a Back Door. Washington Post, September 09. [Online]. Available at
https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/migrant-crisis-hits-europe/2014/09/09/5dd8012d-cbe0-4a8a-895a-033d5a6794f6_story.html?hpid=z1
- Faist, Thomas
 2000 The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration, New York: Oxford University Press.
- 2007 Dual Citizenship in Europe: From Nationhood to Societal Integration. Avebury, UK: Ashgate.
- Falzon, Mark Anthony
 2005 Cosmopolitan Connections: The Sindhi Diaspora, 1860– 2000. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Fargues Philippe and Christine Fandrich
 2012 Migration after the Arab Spring, MPC Research Report 2012/09, European University Institute, Florence. [Online]. Available at
<http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/MPC%202012%20EN%2009.pdf>
- Fargues, Philippe
 2004 Arab migration to Europe: Trends and policies. *International Migration Review*, 38(4), 1348-1371. Retrieved from
https://www.jstor.org/stable/27645449?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
- 2012 Demography, Migration and Revolt in the South of the Mediterranean. In C. Merlini and O. Roy (Eds), *Arab Society in Revolt*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC.
- Fargues, Philippe and Sara Bonfanti
 2014 When the Best Option is a Leaky Boat: Why Migrants Risk Their Lives Crossing the Mediterranean and What Europe Is Doing about It. Migration Policy Centre, EUI. [Online]. Available at
http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/33271/MPC_PB_2014-05.pdf?sequence=1
- Fassmann, Heinz
 1995 Forgetting Skills at Borderline: Foreign Job Seekers on the Viennese Labour Market. *Skilled Migrations*, International Seminar, March 1995. *Studi Emigrazione*, 32(117), 78-89.

Favell, Adrian

2007 Rebooting migration theory: Interdisciplinarity, Globality and Postdisciplinarity. *In* Migration Studies. Brettell Caroline, Hollifield James. Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines (2nd ed.), Routledge.

Fekete, Liz

2003 Death at the Border - Who is to Blame? Institute of Race Relations: London.

2005 The Deportation Machine: Europe, Asylum and Human Rights. Race and Class, 47(1), 64-78. Retrieved from <http://statecrime.org/data/2011/10/fekete2005a.pdf>

Fennema, Meindert

2004 The Concept and Measurement of Ethnic Community. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 30(3), 429-447.

Finotelli, Claudia and Giuseppe Sciortino

2009 The Importance of Being Southern: The Making of Policies of Immigration Control in Italy. European Journal of Migration and Law, 11(2), 119-38. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257368790_The_Importance_of_Being_Southern_The_Making_of_Policies_of_Immigration_Control_in_Italy

Fitzgerald, David

2000 Negotiating Extra-Territorial Citizenship: Mexican Migration and the Transnational Politics of Community, La Jolla: Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California, San Diego. [Online]. Available at <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/9pd111jx>

Fleming, Melissa

2015 Crossings of Mediterranean Sea Exceed 300,000, Including 200,000 to Greece. UNHCR, 28 August 2015. [Online]. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=55e06a5b6&query=mediterranean%20deadliest>

Foley, Douglas

2002 Critical Ethnography: The Reflexive Turn. International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE), 15(4), 469-490. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09518390210145534>

Foner, Nancy; Ruben G. Rumbault and Steven Gold

1998 Anthropology and the Study of Immigration. *In* Immigration Research for a New Century: Multidisciplinary perspectives, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Fortress Europe

2012 "La Fortezza" (The Fortress), [Online]. Available at <http://fortresseurope.blogspot.it/p/fortezza-europa.html>

Foucault, Michel

1973 *The Order of Things*. New York: Vintage Books.

1996 *Sex, Power and the Politics of Identity*. In S. Lotringer (Ed.), *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews 1961-1984*: Michel Foucault, pp. 382-396. New York: Semiotext (e).

Foucault, Michel

1994 *The Order of Things*, Preface. In *An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. Vintage Books.

Friedman, Jonathan

1995 *Global System, Globalization and the Parameters of Modernity*. In M. Featherstone, S. Lash and R. Robertson (eds) *Global Modernities*. London: Sage.

Froebel, Folker, Jurgen Heinrichs and Otto Krey

1980 *The New International Division of Labor*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Frontex

2012 Report. JO HERMES-Situational Update. [Online]. Available at <http://frontex.europa.eu/news/jo-hermes-situational-update-SKGo7W>

2012 Annual Risk Analysis Report 2012. [Online]. Available at https://migrantsatsea.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/frontex_annual_risk_analysis_2012.pdf

Frontex

2011 Quarter 1, 2011, July 2011, pp. 5. [Online]. Available at http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Fran_Q1_2011.pdf

Gallos, Ester

2009 *In the Right Place at the Right Time: Reflections on Multi-Sited Ethnography in the Age of Migration*. In Falzon, Mark-Anthony *Multi-sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research*, Ashgate.

Ganiage, Jean

1960 *La population Européenne de Tunis au Milieu du XIX Siècle, Etude Démographique* (The European Population of Tunis in the Middle of the XIX Century, Demographic Study). PUF, pp 15-18. Paris.

Garelli, Glenda and Martina Tazzioli

2013 *Arab Springs Making Space: Territoriality and Moral Geographies for Asylum Seekers in Italy*, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 31(6), 1004–1021. Retrieved from <http://epd.sagepub.com/content/31/6/1004.full.pdf>

- Geddes, Andrew
2000 *Immigration and European Integration: Towards Fortress Europe?* Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- 2008 Il Rombo dei Cannoni? Immigration and The Center-Right In Italy. *In* Journal of European Public Policy, 15(3), 349-366. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233081530_Il_rombo_dei_cannoni_Cannon_thunders_Immigration_and_the_Centre-Right_in_Italy
- Geertz, Clifford
1995 *After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University.
- Georges, Eugina
1992 Gender, Class, and Migration in the Dominican Republic: Women's Experiences in a Transnational Community. *In* N. Glick Schiller, L. Basch and C. Szanton Blanc (eds.), *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*. New York Academy of Sciences, New York.
- Gibney, Matthew J.
2003 *Deportation and the Liberal State: The Forcible Return of Asylum Seekers and Unlawful Migrants in Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom*. *In* New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper No. 77, UNHCR, Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit.
- Gibney, Matthew J., and Randall Hansen
2003 *Deportation and the Liberal State*. UNHCR New Issues in Refugee Research Working Paper, No. 77, February. Geneva.
- Gielis, Ruben
2009 A Global Sense of Migrant Places. *Towards a Place Perspective in the Study of Migrant Transnationalism*. *Global Networks*, 9(2), 271-287.
- Gilroy, Paul
1993 *Small Acts: Thoughts on the Politics of Black Cultures*. Serpent's Tail Publishing Ltd.
- Giubilaro, Donatella
1997 *Migration from the Maghreb and Migration Pressures: Current Situation and Future Prospects*. Geneva: Employment and Training Department, International Labor Office. [Online]. Available at <http://www.fudepa.org/Biblioteca/recursos/ficheros/BMI20060000435/imp15e.pdf>

Giuffrida, Angela

2011 Tunisian Migrants Open Tensions in Europe. *New York Times*, April 6, 2011. [Online]. Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/07/world/europe/07iht-m07-migrants.html?_r=0

Glick Schiller, N. and Fouron, G. E.

1998 Transnational lives and national identities: The Identity politics of Haitian Immigrants. *In* Smith, M. P. & Guarnizo, L. (eds.) *Transnationalism from Below*. New Brunswick and London, Transaction Publishers.

Glick Schiller, Nina

2003 The Centrality of Ethnography in the Study of Transnational Migration. *In* *American Arrivals: Anthropology Engages the New Immigration*, ed. Nancy Foner, pp. 99–128. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda Basch and Blanc-Szanton, C.

1995 From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration. *Anthropology Quarterly*, 68(1), pp. 48-63.

Gmelch, George

1992 *Double Passage: The Lives of Caribbean Migrants Abroad and Back Home*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Goldring, Luin

1996 Blurring Borders: Constructing Transnational Communities in the Process of Mexico–U.S. Immigration. *Research in Community Sociology*, 6, pp. 69–104.

Goodwin-Gill, Guy

1996 *The Refugee in International Law*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo

1997 The Rise of a Transnational Social Formation and the Mirage of Return Migration among Dominican Transmigrants. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 4(2), 181-233.

Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo

1998 The Rise of Transnational Social Formations: Mexican and Dominican State Responses to Transnational Migration. *Political Power and Social Theory*, 12, 45-94.

Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo

2001 On the Political Participation of Transnational Migrants: Old Practices and New Trends. *In* Gary Gerstle and John Mollenkopf (eds). *Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation* New York: Russell Sage Foundation: 213-265.

- Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo, Alejandro Portes and William Haller
2003 Assimilation and Transnationalism: Determinants of Transnational Political Action among Contemporary Migrants. *American Journal of Sociology*, 108(6), 1211-48.
- Guba, Egon and Lincoln, Yvonna
1981 *Effective Evaluation: Improving the Usefulness of Evaluation Results through Responsive and Naturalistic Approaches*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- Guibernau, Montserrat
2010 Migration and the Rise of the Radical Right, Social Malaise and the Failure of Mainstream Politics. Policy Network. [Online]. Available at <http://www.policy-network.net/publications/3690/Migration-and-the-rise-of-the-radical-right>
- Guiraudon, Virginie and Christian Joppke
2001 *Controlling a New Migration World*. London: Routledge.
- Guiraudon, Virginie and Gallya Lahav
2000 A Reappraisal of the State Sovereignty Debate: The Case of Migration Control. *Comparative Political Studies*, 33(2), 163-195. Retrieved from <http://cps.sagepub.com/content/33/2/163>
- Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson
1992 Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7(1), 6-23.
- 1999 *Culture, Power, Places: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Duke University Press: Durham/London.
- Hage, Ghassan
2005 A Not So Multi-Sited Ethnography of a Not So Imagined Community. *Anthropological Theory*, 5(4), 463-477. Retrieved from <http://ant.sagepub.com/content/5/4/463.full.pdf>
- Hamilton Kimberly and Maia Jachimowicz
2002 Italy's Southern Exposure. Migration Policy Institute (MPI). <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/italys-southern-exposure>
- Hammarén, Nils
2008 *Förorten i Huvudet: Unga Män Om Kön Och Sexualitet I Det Nya Sverige*. PhD. Dissertation, University of Gothenburg.

Heller, Charles and Lorenzo Pezzani

2014 Liquid Traces: Investigating the Deaths of Migrants at the Maritime Frontiers of the EU. In *Forensic Architecture* (ed.) Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth. Berlin: Sternberg Press. [Online]. Available at http://www.academia.edu/12772028/Liquid_Traces_Investigating_the_Deaths_of_Migrants_at_the_EU_s_Maritime_Frontier

Holmes, Seth

2013 *Fresh Fruits, Broken Bodies: Migrant farmworkers in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hopkins, Richard

1994 *Narrative Schooling: Experiential Learning and the Transformation of American Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Howard, Marc Morje

2009 *The Politics of Citizenship in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ibrahim, Maggie

2005 The Securitization of Migration: A Racial Discourse. *International Migration*, 43(5), 163-187. Retrieved from <http://jpr.sagepub.com/content/47/1/43.refs>

Institut National de la Statistique (INS)

2011 [Online]. Available at <http://www.ins.tn/fr/themes/emploi>

International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)

2014 "Undocumented" Justice for Migrants in Italy: A Mission Report. [Online]. Available at <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5452554a4.pdf>

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

2011 *Humanitarian Emergency Response to the Libyan crisis. Seven-Month Report on IOM's Response (28 February 2011 - 27 September 2011)*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

Isin, Engin Fahri

2008 *Acts of Citizenship*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

2009 Citizenship in Flux: The Figure of the Activist Citizen. *Subjectivity*, 29(1), 367-388. Retrieved from <http://www.campusincamps.ps/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Isin-Citizen-Activists.pdf>

James, Scott

1985 *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Jastram Kate and Marilyn Achiron

2001 UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). Refugee Protection: A Guide to International Refugee Law. [Online]. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/publications/legal/3d4aba564/refugee-protection-guide-international-refugee-law-handbook-parliamentarians.html>

Joppke, Christian

2007 Beyond National Models: Civic Integration Policies for Immigrants in Western Europe. *West European Politics*, 30(1), 1-22. Retrieved from <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/joppke.pdf>

Jordan, Bill and Franck Duveill

2002 *Irregular Migration. The Dilemmas of Transnational Mobility*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Kaaki, Rym A.

2003 *Microlending for the Poor: The Challenge of Poverty Alleviation and Evaluation*. Ph. D. Dissertation, USC (University of Southern California).

Kearney, Michael

1995 The Local and the Global: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24(2), 547-65.

1996 *Reconceptualizing the Peasantry: Anthropology in Global Perspective*. Boulder: Westview Press.

2000 Transnational Oaxacan Indigenous Identity: The Case of Mixtecs and Zapotecs *Identities*, 7(2), 173-195. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1070289X.2000.9962664>

Khachani, Mohamed

2004 *Les Marocains d'Ailleurs. La Question Migratoire à l'Epreuve du Partenariat Euro-Marocain*. Publications de l'Association Marocaine d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Migrations, Maroc.

Khalaf, Sulayman and Saad Alkobaisi

1999 Migrants' Strategies of Coping and Patterns of Accommodations in the Oil-rich Gulf Societies: Evidence from the UAE. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 26(2), 271-298.

Khalil, Andrea

2014 Tunisia's Women: Partners in Revolution. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 19(2), 186-199. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13629387.2013.870424>

Khedher, Rayed

2007 The Motivations of Tunisian Men to Migrate to Italy: An Ethnographic Study of the Hay Ettadhamen Township. MA Thesis, CSULB (California State University, Long Beach).

Khedher, Rayed

2008 *Al Harqa*: Dreams beyond the Mediterranean. UFAHAMU (Journal of the African Studies), 34(1/2), 12-37. Retrieved from <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3p76z743>

Khosravi, Shahram

2010 An Ethnography of Migrant “Illegality in Sweden”: Included yet Excepted? *Journal of International Political Theory*, 6(1), 95-116. Retrieved from <http://ipt.sagepub.com/content/6/1/95.refs?patientinform-links=yes&legid=spipt;6/1/95>

King, Russel

1993 Recent Immigration to Italy: Character, Causes, and Consequences. *GeoJournal*, 30(3), 283–292. Retrieved from <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF00806719>

King, Russel and Krysia Rybaczuk

1993 Southern Europe and the International Division of Labour: From Mass Emigration to Mass Immigration. In King, R. (ed.). *The New Geography of European Migrations*. London: Belhaven.

Kingsley, Davis

1988 Social Science Approaches to International Migration, *Population and Development Review*, 14(88), 245-261. Retrieved from <http://opensample.info/social-science-approaches-to-international-migration>

Kingsley, Patrick

2015 Over a Million Migrants and Refugees Have Reached Europe this Year. *The Guardian*. Tuesday 22 December. [Online]. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/22/one-million-migrants-and-refugees-have-reached-europe-this-year-iom>

Kington, Tom

2011 Berlusconi Claims He Will Empty Italian Island of Lampedusa of Migrants. *The Guardian*, March 30, 2011. [Online]. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/30/berlusconi-empty-island-lampedusa-migrants>

Koch, L.

1989 Impact of the Reversal of the Migration Situation on the Social Structures of Certain Countries: The Case of Italy. *International Migration*, 27(2), 191-201. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2435.1989.tb00249.x/abstract>

- Koser, Khalid
2005 Irregular Migration, State Security and Human Security. A Paper prepared for the Policy Analysis and Research Programme of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), September 2005. [Online]. Available at https://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/gcim/tp/TP5.pdf
- Kundnani, Arun
2007 Integrationism: The Politics of Anti-Muslim Racism. *Race and Class*, 48(4), 24-44. Retrieved from <http://rac.sagepub.com/content/48/4/24.short?rss=1&ssource=mfc>
- Lancee, Bram
2010 The Economic Returns of Immigrants' Bonding and Bridging Social Capital. The Case of the Netherlands. *International Migration Review*, 44(1), 202-226. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2009.00803.x/abstract>
- Latour, Bruno
1999 On Recalling ANT. *The Sociological Review*, 47(S1), 15-25. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1999.tb03480.x/abstract>
- LeCompte, Margret and Jean Schensul
1999 *Analyzing and Interpreting Ethnographic Data*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Lee, Everett
1966 A Theory of Migration. *Demography*, 3(1), 47-57.
- Lefebvre, Henri
1991 *The Production of Space* Oxford: Blackwell.
- Leitner, Helga, Eric Sheppard and Kristen Sziarto
2008 The Spatialities of Contentious Politics. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 33(2), 157-172. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2008.00293.x/abstract>
- Levin, Iris and Ruth Fincher
2010 Tangible Transnational Links in the Houses of Italian Immigrants in Melbourne. *Global Networks*, 10(3), 401-423. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2010.00295.x/abstract>
- Levitt, Peggy and Sanjeev Khagram
2008 Constructing Transnational Studies. In S. Khagram & P. Levitt (Eds.), *The Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections and Innovations*, pp. 1-18. New York: Routledge.

- Levitt, Peggy
2001 *The Transnational Villagers*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Levitt, Peggy and Mary Waters
2002 *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*. New York: Russell Sage Publications.
- Levitt, Peggy and Nina Glick Schiller
2004 *Transnational Perspectives on Migration: Conceptualizing Simultaneity*. *International Migration Review*, 38(3), 1002–1039. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00227.x/abstract>
- 2008 *Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society*. In Khagram, S., Levitt, P. (eds.) *the Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections and Innovations*, New York: Routledge.
- Ley, David
2004 *Transnational Spaces and Everyday Lives*. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 29(2), 151-164. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.0020-2754.2004.00122.x/abstract>
- Livi, Massimo Bacci
2011 *Migranti Irregolari in Italia: Oggi dalla Tunisia Domani dalla Libia?* *La Repubblica*, 7 Aprile, 2011. [Online]. Available at http://www.cnel.it/application/xmanager/projects/cnel/attachments/shadow_documentazioni_attachment/file_allegatos/000/166/660/Livibaccimarzo.pdf
- Lo Piccolo, Francesco and Davide Leone
2008 *New Arrivals, Old Places: Demographic Changes and New Planning Challenges in Palermo and Naples*. *Journal International Planning Studies*, 13(4), 361-389. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13563470802519030>
- Mabrouk, Mahdi
2003 *El-Harikoun*. Pour une Approche Sociologique du Milieu Social des Immigrés Clandestins et de leur Imaginaire (El Harikoun, for a Sociological Approach to the Social Mmilieu of Clandestine Migrants and their Imaginary). *Revue Tunisienne des Sciences Sociales*, 125(2-3), 15-49.
- Mahdavi, Pardis
2011 *Gridlock: Labor, Migration, and Human Trafficking in Dubai*. Stanford University Press.

- Mamdani, Mahmood
 2002 Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism. *American Anthropologist*, 104(3), 766-775. Retrieved from <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/sj6/mamdanigoodmuslimbadmuslim.pdf>
- Marcus, George
 1995 Ethnography in/of World System: The Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24, 95-117.
 1998 *Ethnography through Thick and Thin*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Masera, Luca
 2012 Nuove Norme Contro i Datori di Lavoro Che Impiegano Immigrati Irregolari. *Diritto Penale Contemporaneo*. http://www.penalecontemporaneo.it/tipologia/0-/-/1655-nuove_norme_contro_i_datori_di_lavoro_che_impiegano_immigrati_irregolari/#
- Massey, Doreen
 2005 *For Space*. London: Sage
- Massey, Douglas S; Arango, J.; Hugo, G.; Kouaouci, A.; Pellegrino, A. and Taylor J. E.
 1993 Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal. *Population and Development Review*, 19(3), 431-466.
- Massey, Douglas S and Arango, J. et al.
 1998 *Worlds in Motion. Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Massey, Douglas S., Rafael Alarcón, Jorge Durand, and Humberto González,
 1987 *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Massey, Douglas S.; Jorge Durand, and Nolan J. Malone
 2002 *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Age of Economic Integration*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Matassa, Giulia
 2014 The Construction of Immigration in Italian Media. *E-International Relations*, August 25, 2014. [Online]. Available at <http://www.e-ir.info/2014/08/25/the-construction-of-immigration-in-italian-media/>
- Mazzucato, Valentina
 2008 The Double Engagement: Transnationalism and Integration – Ghanaian Migrants' Lives between Ghana and the Netherlands. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(2), 199-216. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13691830701823871>

McMurray, David

2000 *In and Out of Morocco: Smuggling and Migration in a Frontier Boomtown*. University of Minnesota Press.

McNevin, Anne

2006 Political Belonging in a Neo-Liberal Era: The Struggle of The 'Sans-Papiers' *Citizenship Studies*, 10(2), 135-151.

2007 Irregular Migrants, Neoliberal Geographies and Spatial Frontiers of the Political. *Review of International Studies*, 33(4), 655-674. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13621020600633051>

2009 Doing What Citizens Do: Migrant Struggles at the Edges of Political Belonging. *Local-Global: Identity, Security, Community*, 6, 67-77. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265156008_Doing_What_Citizens_Do_Migrant_Struggles_at_the_Edges_of_Political_Belonging

Meer, Nasar and Tariq Modood

2009 Refutations of Racism in the 'Muslim Question.' *Patterns of Prejudice*, 43(3-4), 335-354. Retrieved from http://www.tariqmodood.com/uploads/1/2/3/9/12392325/refutations_of_racism.pdf

Merlino, Massimo

2009 The Italian (In) Security Package. Security versus Rule of Law and EU Fundamental Rights, Challenge, Liberty and Security. *In* Lazaridis, G. *Security, Insecurity, and Migration in Europe*. University of Leicester. [Online]. Available at <http://aei.pitt.edu/10764/1/1809.pdf>

Merriam, Sharan

1998 *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, Sharan and Edward Simpson

2000 *A Guide to Research for Educators and Trainers of Adults*. Malabar, FL: Krieger.

Mezzadra, Sandro and Brett Neilson

2003 Né Qui, Né Altrove-Migration, Detention, Desertion : A Dialogue. *Borderlands*, 2(1). Retrieved from http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol2no1_2003/mezzadra_neilson.html

Ministero dell'Interno,

2011e Completato il Piano Straordinario dei Rimpatri Definito da Maroni a Tunisi, Complessivamente Sono Tornati nel loro Paese 3.385 Tunisini, gli Ultimi 50 Sonopartiti da Palermo, http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/it/sezioni/sala_stampa/

- Mintz, Sidney
1998 The Localization of Anthropological Practice: From Area Studies to Transnationalism. *Critique of Anthropology*, 18(2), 117–33. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249628627_The_Localization_of_Anthropological_PracticeFrom_area_studies_to_transnationalism
- Mitsilegas, Valsamis
2004 Measuring Irregular Immigration: Implications for Law, Policy and Human Rights. In Bogusz, B., Cholewinski, R. et al (eds.) *Irregular Migration and Human Rights: Theoretical, European and International Perspectives*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Modood, Tariq, Anna Triandafyllidou and Ricard Zapata-Barrero
2006 *Multiculturalism, Muslims, and Citizenship*. Routledge- London.
- Monzini, Paola
2007 Sea-Border Crossings: The Organization of Irregular Migration to Italy Mediterranean Politics, 12(2), 163-184. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13629390701388679>
- Nadeau, Barbie Latza
2015 Italy Drives Muslims Underground Rome's. *The Daily Beast*, January 12, 2015. [Online]. Available at <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/12/01/italy-drives-muslims-underground.html>
- Nascimbene, Bruno
2000 The Regularisation of Clandestine Immigrants in Italy. *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 2(3), 337-359.
- Negri, Antonio and Michael Hardt
2000 *Empire*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press.
- Ngai, Mae
2004 *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- National Statistics Institute (NIS)
2014 [Online]. Available at http://census.ins.tn/sites/default/files/vol%201%20rgph%202014%20site%20%281%29.pdfnotizie/immigrazione/0000067_2011_10_07_pianorimpatricompleto.html_1562036126.html
- Nyers, Peter
2010 No One is Illegal between City and Nation. *Studies in Social Justice* 4 (2). 127-143.

- Ochs, Elinor and Lisa Capps
1996 Narrating the Self. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 25, 19-43.
- Okely, Judith
1996 *Own or Other Culture*. London - New York: Routledge.
- Ong, Aihwa
1996 Chinese Modernities: Narratives of Nation and of Capitalism. *In* A. Ong and D. Nonini, (eds.), *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*. New York: Routledge.
- Ong, Aihwa and Donald Nonini
1997 *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*, Routledge, New York.
- Ossman, Susan
2002 *Three Faces of Beauty*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Ossman, Susan
2004 *Studies in Serial Migration International Migration*, 42(4), 111-21. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.0020-7985.2004.00297.x/abstract>
- Ossman, Susan
2007 *The Places We Share: Migration, Subjectivity, and Global Mobility* Lexington Books.
- Ossman, Susan
2013 *Moving Matters: Paths of Serial Migration*. Stanford University Press
- Oucho, John
1996 *Urban Migrants and Rural Development in Kenya*. Nairobi University Press.
- Palidda, Salvatore
2009 Insertion, integration and rejection of immigration in Italy. *In* Guild E., Carrera S. (eds), *Illiberal Liberal States: Immigration, Citizenship and Integration in the EU*. London, Ashgate.
- Paolo, Cuttitta
2014 *Migration Control in the Mediterranean Grenzsaum: Reading Ratzel in the Strait of Sicily*. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 29(2), 117-131. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjbs20>
- Papadopoulos, Dimitris, Niamh Stephenson and Vassilis Tsianos
2008 *Escape Routes: Control and Subversion in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Pluto Press.

Pascouau, Yves

2011 Schengen Area under Pressure: Controversial Responses and Worrying Signs. European Policy Center, March 05, 2011. [Online]. Available at http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_1270_schengen_area_under_pressure_-_controversial_responses_and_worrying_signs.pdf

Pastore, Ferruccio, Paola Monzini and Giuseppe Sciortino

2006 Schengen's Soft Underbelly? Irregular Migration and Human Smuggling across Land and Sea Borders to Italy. *International Migration*, 44(4), 95-119. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2006.00381.x/pdf>

Pellizzari, Michele

2013 The Use of Welfare by Migrants in Italy. *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol. 34, no. 2, pp.155-166.

Pieterse, Jan Nederveen

2003 *Globalization and Culture*. Rowman and Little field Publishers.

Poggioli, Silvia

2011 Berlusconi Promises to Remove Migrants On Lampedusa. NPR, March 31, 2011-4:00 am . ET. [Online]. Available at <http://www.npr.org/2011/03/31/135002296/italy-migrants-update>

Polkinghome, Donald E.

1991 Narrative and Self Concept in *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 1(2-3), 135-153.

Portes, Alejandro

1999 Immigration Theory for a New Century: Some Problems and Opportunities. In: Charles Hirschman et al. (eds), *The Handbook of International Migration*. The Russell Sage Foundation.

Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri,

2011 Decreto, dichiarazione dello stato di emergenza umanitaria nel territorio del Nord Africa per consentire un efficace contrasto dell'eccezionale afflusso di cittadini nel territorio nazionale. [Online]. Available at http://www.protezionecivile.gov.it/resources/cms/documents/DPCM_7_4_2011_cittadini_extracomunitari.pdf

Pries, Ludger

1999 *Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Pries, Ludger

2001 *New transnational Social Spaces. International Migration and Transnational Companies in the Early Twenty-first Century*. New York: Routledge.

- Pries, Ludger
2007 Transnationalism: Trendy Catch-all or Specific Research Programme? A Proposal for Transnational Organization Studies as a Micro-macro-link. Working Paper 34/2007, COMCAD – Center on Migration, Citizenship and Development. [Online]. Available at https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/tdrc/ag_comcad/downloads/workingpaper_34_Pries.pdf
- Pries, Ludger
2008 Transnational Societal Spaces: Which Units of Analysis, Reference and Measurement. *In* Ludger Pries (ed.), *Rethinking Transnationalism: The Meso-Link of Organizations*, Abingdon: Routledge.
- Reyneri, Emilio
1998 The role of the Underground Economy in Irregular Migration to Italy: Cause of Effect? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 24(2), 313-331. Retrieved from <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/41778/3/reyneri.pdf>
- Roberts, Bryan, Reanne Frank and Fernando Lozano-Ascencio
1999 Transnational Migrant Communities and Mexican Migration to the US. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), 238–266.
- Robinson, William
2004 *A Theory of Global Capitalism: Production, Class, and State in a Transnational World*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Rocha-Trindade, Maria Beatriz
1986 Towards Reintegration of Emigrants. *In* *Closing the Migratory Cycle. The Case of Portugal*, Saarbrücken, Verlag Breitenbach Publishers.
- Ruggiero, Vincenzo
2000 The Fight to Reappear. *Social Justice*, 27(2), 45–60.
- Rusconi, Silvia
2010 Italy's Migration Experiences. *Network Migration in Europe e.V.* [Online]. Available at <http://migrationeducation.de/fileadmin/uploads/Italy.pdf>
- Ryan, Louise
2011 Migrants' Social Networks and Weak Ties: Accessing Resources and Constructing Relationships Post-migration. *The Sociological Review*, 59(4), 707-724.
- Rygel, Kim
2011 Bordering Solidarities: Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement and Camps at Calais. *Citizenship Studies*, 15(1), 1-19.

Said, Edward

1997 *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. New York: Vintage Books

Salih, Ruba

2001 *Confronting Modernities: Muslim Women in Italy*. International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World. ISIM Newsletter (7). [Online]. Available at http://www.isim.nl/files/newsl_7.pdf

2002 Shifting Meanings of 'Home': Cosmopolitan and Identity in Moroccan Women's Transnational Practices between Italy and Morocco. *In* Al-Ali and Koser, *New Approaches to Migration? Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home*. London, New York: Routledge.

2003 *Gender in Transnationalism: Home, Longing and Belonging among Moroccan Migrant Women*. Routledge.

Santino, Severoni

2011 Increased Influx of Migrants in Lampedusa, (Italy Joint report from the Ministry of Health, Italy and the WHO Regional Office for Europe mission of 28–29 March 2011 Lampedusa). http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/182137/e96761.pdf

Santos, Lidia

1993 Elementos Juridicos de la Integracion de los Extranjeros. *In* *Immigracion e Integracion en Europa*, ed. Georges Tapinos, 91–125. Barcelona : Itinera Libros.

Sartori, Giovanni

2002 *Pluralismo, Multiculturalismo e Estranei*. Milan: Rizzoli.

Sassen, Saskia

2006 *Territory, Authority, Rights. From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Sayyid, Saskia and Abdulkarim Vakil

2010 *Thinking Through Islamophobia: Global Perspectives*. London: Hurst

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy

2010 Parts Unknown Undercover Ethnography of the Organs-Trafficking Underworld. *Ethnography*, 5(1), 29-73.

Schiffer, Sabine and Constantin Wagner

2011 Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia - New Enemies, Old Patterns. *Race and Class*, 52(3), 77–84.

- Sciortino, Giovanni and Colombo, A.
2004 The Flow and the Flood: Immigrants in the Italian Newspaper Discourse. *Journal of Italian Modern Studies*, 9(1), 94–113.
- Scott, James
1985 *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

1990 *Domination and the Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Senato della Repubblica
2011b Resoconto Sommario Resoconto Stenografico Allegati, 504a Seduta Pubblica (Pomeridiana) Mercoledì 16 Febbraio 2011. [Online]. Available at <http://www.senato.it/service/PDF/PDFServer/BGT/00525381.pdf>
- Senato della Repubblica
2011 Resoconto Sommario Resoconto Stenografico Allegati, 504a Seduta Pubblica (Pomeridiana) Mercoledì 16 Febbraio 2011. [Online]. Available at <http://www.senato.it/service/PDF/PDFServer/BGT/00525381.pdf>
- Sheridan, Lorraine
2006 Islamophobia Pre- and Post-September 11th, 2001. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 21(3), 317-336.
- Sigona, Nado
2007 *Figli del Ghetto. Gli Italiani, i Campi Nomadi e l'Invenzione degli Zingari*. Civezzano: Nonluoghi Editore.
- Silverstein, Paul A.
2005 Immigrant Racialization and the New Savage Slot: Race, Migration, and Immigration in the New Europe. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 34(1), 363- 384.
- Singer-Kerel, Jeanne
1991 Foreign Workers in France, 1891-1936. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 279-293.
- Singerman, Diane
2014 Youth, Gender, and Dignity in the Egyptian Uprising. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 9(3), 1–27.
- Sivanandan, Ambalavaner
2001 Poverty is the New Black. *Race and Class*, 43(2), 2-5.

- Smith, Michael Peter, and Luis Eduardo Guarnizo
1998 *Transnationalism from Below*. Vol. 6, Comparative Urban and Community Research. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Smith, Michael Peter and Luis Eduardo Guarnizo
1998 *Transnational Localities: Community, Technology and the Politics of Membership within the Context of Mexico and U.S. Migration*, pp. 196–238. *In Transnationalism from Below*, vol. 6: Comparative Urban and Community Research. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction.
- Soja, Edward
1989 *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso.
- Soysal, Yasemin
1994 *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*. University of Chicago Press.
- Spears, Arthur
1999 *Race and Ideology: Language, Symbolism, and Popular Culture*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty
1988 *Can the Subaltern Speak?* In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Nelson, C. and Grossberg, L., 271–313. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan Education.
- Castles Stephen, Hein De Haas and Mark Miller
2014 *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 5th edition. Palgrave 2 Macmillan (UK) Guilford Press (US).
- Stivachtis, Yannis
2008 *International Migration and the Politics of Identity and Security*. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 1-24.
- Stoller, Paul
2002 *Money Has No Smell: The Africanization of New York City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Teitelbaum, Michael and Weiner Myron
1995 *Threatened Peoples, Threatened Borders: World Migration and U.S. Policy*. New York: Norton.
- Terray, Emmanuel et al.
2000 *Sans-Papiers: L'Archaisme Fatal (Undocumented: Fatal Anarchy)*.

- Thobani, Sunera
2007 *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Thomsen, Thyra
2005 *Social Perspectives on Mobility*. Ashgate.
- Tilly, Charles
1990 *Transplanted Networks*. In *Immigration Reconsidered*, V. Yans-MacLoughlin (Ed.), New York: Oxford University Press.
- Triandafyllidou, Anna and Maria Ilies
2010 *EU Irregular Migration Policies*. In Anna Triandafyllidou (Ed.): *Irregular Migration in Europe - Myths and Realities*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Program)
1994 UNDP's Human Development Report. [Online]. Available at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)
2011 Update no 25: Humanitarian Situation in Libya and the Neighbouring Countries. [Online]. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/4e0201a09/update-no30-humanitarian-situation-libya-neighbouring-countries.html>
- Urry, John
2003 *The Global Complexity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

2007 *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Vaccina, F.
1983 *Alcuni Aspetti dell'Immigrazione Tunisina a Mazara del Vallo*. *Studi Emigrazione*, 71, 89-99.
- Valtolina, Giovanni
2010 *I Cittadini Europei e L'immigrazione: Gli Italiani Sono i Più Preoccupati*. *Liberta Civili*, 6(11), 92-102.
- Vaughan-Williams, N.
2011, *European Border Security after the Arab Spring*. EU-GRASP Working Paper 24 December, 2011, [Online]. Available at http://cris.unu.edu/sites/cris.unu.edu/files/WP24_European%20border%20security%20after%20the%20Arab%20Spring.pdf

- Veugelers, John
1994 Recent Immigration Politics in Italy: A Short Story. *West European Politics*, 17(2), 33-49.
- Vizzini, S.
1983 Su Talunni Aspetti Demografici ed Economici dell'Imigrazione Araba a Mazara del Vallo, *Studi Emigrazione*, 71, 362-6.
- Vora, Neha
2008 Producing Diasporas and Globalization: Indian Middle-Class Migrants in Dubai. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 81(2), 377-406.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel
1979 *The Capitalist World-Economy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Walters, William
2008 Acts of Demonstration: Mapping the Territory of (Non)-Citizenship. In Isin, E. F and G.M Nielsen, eds. *Acts of Citizenship*, London: Zed Books.
- Weiner, Myron
1995 *The Global Migration Crisis: Challenges to States and to Human Rights*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Weiss, Robert
1995 *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies* (1st Free Press pbk. Ed.). New York: Free Press.
- Wexler, L.
2007 The Non-Legal Role of International Human Rights Law in Addressing Immigration, *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*. 2007(12), 359-403.
- WGAD (Working Group on Arbitrary Detention)
2009b. Statement by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention at the Conclusion of its Mission to Italy. United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. [Online]. Available at <http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/FC935BD49C6C6998C125750100693B4C?opendocument>
- White, Jenny B.
1995 Turks in Germany: Overview of the Literature. *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, 29(1), 12–15.
- Whyte, William
1982 Interviewing in Field Research. In R. G. Burgess (Ed.), *Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual* (pp. 111–122). London: George Allen and Unwin.

- Wilkes, Sybella
2012 Mediterranean Takes Record as Most Deadly Stretch of Water for Refugees and Migrants in 2011. UNHCR Report. [Online]. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/briefing/2012/1/4f27e01f9/mediterranean-takes-record-deadly-stretch-water-refugees-migrants-2011.html>
- Willis, Paul and Mats Trondman
2000 Manifesto for Ethnography. *Ethnography*, 1(1), 5-16.
- Wolf, Diane
1997 Family Secrets: Transnational Struggles among Children of Filipino Migrants. *Sociological Perspectives*, 40(3), 457-82.
- Woodcock, Shannon
2010 Gender as Catalyst for Violence against Roma in Contemporary Italy. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 44(5), 469-488.
- Woods, Dwayne
2010 A Critical Analysis of the Northern League's Ideographical Profiling. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 15(2), 189-219. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13569310903512282?tab=permissions&scroll=top>
- Worby, Eric
2010 Address Unknown: The Temporality of Displacement and the Ethics of Disconnection among Zimbabwean Migrants in Johannesburg. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36(2), 417-31. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03057070.2010.485792>
- Wright, Cynthia
2003 Moments of Emergence: Organizing by and with Undocumented and Non-Citizen People in Canada after September 11. *Refuge* 21(3), 5-15. Retrieved from <http://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/article/view/23480>
- Yee, B.W.K & Thu, N.D.
1987 Correlates of Drug Use and Abuse among Indochinese Refugees: Mental Health Implications. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, 19(1), 17-83.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira
2011 *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations*. London: Sage

Zaccaria, Paola

2011 Medi-terranean Borderization or Deterritorializing Mediterranean Space. *In* Anglo-Southern Relations: From Deculturation to Transculturation, pp. 106-127, Lecce: Salento Books (BESA).

Zincone, Giovanna and Tiziana Caponio

2006 The Multilevel Governance of Migration. *In* R. Penninx, M. Berger & K. Kraal (eds.), *The Dynamics of International Migration and Settlement in Europe: A State of the Art*, 269-304. IMISCOE Research Series. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Zincone, Giovanna

1998 Illegality, Enlightenment and Ambiguity: A Hot Italian Recipe. *South European Society and Politics*, 3(3), 43-81.

Zincone, Giovanna

1998 Irregular Migration in Italy. *In* CLANDESTINO Research. [Online]. Available at http://clandestino.eliamep.gr/wpcontent/uploads/2009/10/clandestino_report_italy_final_3.pdf

Zolberg, Aristide

1989 The Next Waves: Migration Theory for a Changing World. *International Migration Review*, 23(30), 403-430.

Zontini, Elizabetta

2010 *Transnational Families, Migration and Gender. Moroccan and Filipino Women in Bologna and Barcelona*. Oxford: Berghahn Press.